

# The Modern Language Journal

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## Challenges to Change

YOU have before you today a rather confused individual who has consented to do something in which he has little faith—that is to try to change the behavior of a group of people by talking to them.\* Leaders in the field of group dynamics have long ago learned that it is much more effective to start out with a problem inventory of the individual members of a conference, and then to have the members work on the problems that are real and near to them. I agree with these men. Nevertheless, the fact that I am not going to solve any problems for you and the fact that you are a very homogeneous group with many well known common problems give me the courage to describe and to point up for you some of the problems that challenge the thinking and resourcefulness of the teachers in Detroit and the metropolitan area.

You have heard many of these problems discussed before. But, ever hopeful, I venture to mention them once again.

We do not have the answers. Our people are groping for the solution and clutching at straws. Audio visual aids with sound films, color films, filmstrips, phonograph records, tape recordings, radio programs, etc. are being used as helps. The reading method, the natural method, the direct method, the oral-aural approach, and the linguistic approach likewise have their place in the foreign language classroom. But I really believe that our difficulties go deeper than the choice of classroom techniques. Our philosophy of education as administrators and foreign language teachers is being challenged today. In many instances we have been discriminated against and the educational world has passed us by. But at the same time we have sinned as much as we have been sinned against. We are being challenged to survive, if we can!

The American people are among the most

kind hearted and sympathetic people in the world. Endless time and money are spent to provide treatment and instruction for the crippled, the mentally retarded, the hard of hearing, and those with poor vision. I visited a sight-saving classroom recently, and was pleased to see the fine equipment, the most modern desks, new large-letter typewriters, extra tables and chairs, and only about twelve pupils in the class. I felt good in the realization of the fact that here in our American school system we were giving these unfortunates a chance to learn and to develop to the full extent of their abilities.

But something troubled me, and gradually it dawned on me that we were truly democratic only up to a certain point. We did exceedingly well in trying to help the incapacitated, the underprivileged, and the average. But, when it came to supplying money, extra time, and equipment for gifted students, our democratic philosophy of helping each individual to the full extent of his ability began to weaken. High school principals found that they could not carry small classes of gifted pupils in advanced algebra, physics, and advanced foreign language. The small enrollment lowered the pupil-teacher ratio and made it too expensive an item for their budget. These gifted pupils, the scientists and statesmen of the future, were to be denied the kind of education and training that were their birthright as American boys and girls in our public school system.

What can the foreign language teachers do to correct this situation? The answer is not easy. The teacher must study and come to know his administrators. I find the policies in different high schools as varied as the educational background and the personalities of the principals concerned. The principal with a happy and successful experience in foreign language as a student generally will be sympathetic to small advanced foreign language classes. The principals who have come through the departments of industrial education, health

\* An address delivered before the Modern Foreign Language Teachers Section Meeting of the Ohio Education Association, Columbus, Ohio, October 31, 1952.

education, and those areas where no foreign language was ever required will often see no need for providing special language classes for the more able students. The teacher must make use of the human relations approach. The surest way to defeat is to approach your administrator with the old argument about the superior cultural advantages of your particular subject matter. You must sell him your subject using arguments expressed in terms that are meaningful in the light of present day living. We are being challenged to sell our subject to the administrators and to the public.

The prediction is that 750,000 Americans will go abroad this year. In 1951 there were about 440,000 Americans who resided and worked outside the United States. Leland Stowe calls these million and more human beings America's most important export. He asks this question: "How exportable are we Americans?" It is high time we attacked this problem in the light of increased demands for the service of Americans abroad. Our business men, our traveling vacationers, and our boys and girls in the service are the real diplomats and representatives abroad. These individuals in their personal and informal contacts with people in other lands can do more to establish friendly relations with a nation than the most accomplished diplomat. A working knowledge of a foreign language is going to be a great help to them. Again and again we have heard about the pleasure of foreign speaking people when they meet an American who makes an effort to talk to them in their own language. To them the fact that the individual is trying is in itself a manifestation of good will.

Are these future informal representatives of the United States being channeled through the foreign language classes of our schools, or are these classes being by-passed because foreign language does not fit into their particular curriculum? Do you and your counselors disagree on what should be in the program for each individual child? Maybe the counselors consider foreign language too difficult for this future machinist or oil worker who will one day travel abroad for some oil company. Maybe all his classmates and his parents have the same impression. Here, indeed, is work for the teachers in the department of foreign languages. We

have to build up attitudes and appreciations that have disintegrated through decades of misguided practice. Can we as teachers interested in general education provide a rich foreign language experience for the industrial arts and the commercial student?

I once heard a description of a well-cultured gentleman that said that "he was up to his ears in the affairs of the world today." If that is true, many of us foreign language people are in a rut, where we have planted ourselves, righteously indignant with the world that has passed us by. It is surprising how many conferences there are on elementary and secondary education in which no mention is made of the place of foreign language in the school curriculum. Up to last year, July 1952, had you heard of a foreign language section at a N.E.A. meeting? The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and Secondary School conferences open and close without having been attended by many foreign language teachers. The vocational, industrial education, health education, commercial, and science people were there and participating too! We have been too content to sit back, fold our hands, and quote John Burroughs in a superior and haughty way, "My Own Shall Come to Me." With all due respect to John Burroughs, we have delayed too long; the school public has gone on without us; and we have not been recognized.

Just as sure as each one of you is, that we have a great contribution to make to the education of American youth, just so must we as foreign language teachers see to it that we are represented at every local, state, and national educational conference. It will take money, of course, and we shall have to begin in a small way. In Detroit the Foreign Language Teachers Association has contributed funds for the last two years to pay the expenses of a representative at the Michigan Secondary Schools Conference and Workshop held for a week during the month of August at Higgins Lake. Many teachers have paid their own expenses to week-end conferences elsewhere on general education and curriculum planning. These teachers who have contributed their own time and money have made only a small beginning, but they have begun!

We have been challenged to rub shoulders



with other departments in the school curriculum. We must have our collective ear to the ground, and whenever and wherever there is a meeting or conference we must become a part of it, participate actively and win friends for our cause. I made this statement to a young instructor at a local university. He replied that it didn't make any difference to him if foreign languages were dropped from the school curriculum; he could always get a job teaching something else. He missed the point entirely. If we believe that the study of foreign language should be an important part, a vitally important part of the education of the citizens of tomorrow, then we must work not to keep our jobs, but to see to it that future citizens are not deprived of the privilege and opportunity to study any foreign language at all.

We are living in a time of organization and pressure groups. If such procedure is our only chance of survival, then we may have to learn some of the techniques from groups that have operated successfully. Arthur Moehlman in his book on *School Administration*, says

The vocationalists organized the American Vocational Association . . . to protect and extend their interests. This organization, with a membership of more than 15,000 vocational teachers, maintains an office in Washington with a permanent secretary who acts in close conjunction with the Assistant Commissioner of Education in charge of Vocational Education. It is considered by competent newspapermen as one of the strongest lobbies at the national capital. . . . the actual power, for all practical purposes, over vocational education rests with a well organized and smoothly operating pressure-lobby, composed of personnel who have a direct economic interest in its continuation.<sup>1</sup>

This lobby is so well organized on a state and local basis that in a few hours' time it can flood congress with a deluge of telegrams from a seemingly generally aroused public. We are cognizant of the dangers of such practices in education, and we must view them realistically and critically. At least we should be aware of what these groups are doing in other subject matter areas. If we feel that our cause is a worthy one and that we must fight to keep the humanities in the public school curriculum, then we may have to reorganize our organizations.

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Moehlman, *School Administration*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1940, p. 879.

A little inventory of my participation in foreign language organizations finds me spread out very thin. With membership in too many groups, I find myself a passive member of each organization with little time, money, or energy left to work for the common objective of them all. My impression of the meetings of these various organizations is that too few of them have been concerned with the problems of the classroom teacher. Fortunately for us, the last two years the CSMLTA has organized a teacher training section, one part devoted to teacher training, the other to the problems of teaching in the classroom. We shall begin to reap the benefits of their discussions soon. My hope is that this group will always keep a vigilant eye on the place of foreign language in the school curriculum.

Could we as a group accomplish more by having one powerful organization with smaller sub-groups or chapters? Here is a challenge to our professional organizations: Have they been too self-centered in their periodic meetings while the foreign language classes in the high schools withered on the vine? If our organizations are what we make them, then let us accept the challenge to make our organizations fight for us. The least they can do is to repeat United States Commissioner McGrath's speech and say, "Me too!"

My comment, a moment ago, on the organization of the vocational teachers was not meant to be a criticism. I respect and admire them for what they have to offer the youth of today, and also for what they have accomplished professionally. As foreign language teachers we are, or should be, a part of the vocational training of our boys and girls. My admiration extends to men and women in the fields of industrial education and health education. Many of our teachers have commented on the fact that the majority of our counselors and principals seem to be chosen from the areas of vocational, industrial, and health education. Our foreign language teachers have found some of these counselors and principals to be unsympathetic. In fact, in several instances, they claim to have been discriminated against in the scheduling of classes for high school boys and girls. At this point let me digress a moment to talk about

the possibility and probability of foreign language teachers being promoted to counselor.

For some time I have been concerned about the future of foreign language teachers. They are very capable and are excellent administrative material. Yet the opportunities for promotion are very few. In the last five years only one foreign language teacher has been promoted to the position of counselor in the Detroit secondary schools. In the last ten years only one foreign language teacher has been promoted to foreign language department head. What promotions can the foreign language teachers look forward to in a large school system? I was so bold as to ask one day why so many administrators were chosen from other fields. The answer was that men and women in vocational, industrial, and health education seem to understand and to get along better with growing boys and girls. They brought fewer problems to the office, caused less trouble for the counselors by giving fewer failing marks, gave all the pupils something they could do and enjoy, and worked on a more friendly plane with their pupils. In all fairness we must admit that this might be true in many cases.

This brings up the problem of failure in foreign language. Wherever a teacher has failed a large per cent of pupils in a foreign language class, he himself has failed as a teacher of boys and girls, and in the eyes of his administrator may seem to be undeserving of promotion. The foreign language teacher, like teachers in other departments, must adapt his objectives to meet the needs and abilities of each pupil in his class.

In the seventeen comprehensive high schools of Detroit the per cent of failure as of June 1950 varied from 2.4% to 21.4%. The schools with the greatest number of graduates going to college, strangely enough, had the highest percentage of failures. Of the 7911 pupils enrolled in foreign language in grades 10-12 there were 961 who failed in one semester. In a one year period that means that almost 2000 boys and girls found foreign language study a most unhappy and unsatisfactory experience.

Foreign language has been an elective subject for years. Pupils generally do not have to take it, and yet in those subjects that are compulsory the rate of failure is generally less.

Ordinarily we do draw pupils of better ability, and the motivation is already there. They take foreign language because they want it. Nevertheless, more than 10% of them fail. Consequently each year more and more advanced foreign language classes are being dropped because the attrition in earlier classes has been so great. Principals feel justified in refusing to let a class of foreign language begin unless the teacher can guarantee a respectable number for the fourth semester. Schools with such a curtailed foreign language program are disappointing their students with a most frustrating experience. They bring their foreign language classes up to the point where they should especially enjoy their work, and then deny them the privilege of going on.

Let me tell you of a sad experience I had in trying to do something about this problem. In one of our technical high schools the percentage of failure was consistently over 20%. I had asked the principal, department head, and teachers to have an informal conference about the problem. But I must have used the wrong approach because the teachers came in bristling and declaring emphatically that they could not lower their standards. They felt they were justified in passing only those students who were able to pass their rugged tests. I was not able to help these teachers to see that a different set of standards or goals was needed to meet the needs of their changed student body. They were teaching college preparatory foreign language to pupils in a school that specialized in technical and industrial education.

How can we teachers continue to grow on the job, and to retain the facility to change our philosophy and methods of teaching to meet the needs of a changing school population and a changing society? We are being challenged to prove to educators that we too understand boys and girls, that we get along well with them. And that means *all* the pupils in our classes, not just the upper 10 per cent of the student body.

Walter Kaulfers in his article, "Languages for the Millions," does not mince words when he comments on the situation, in the *Modern Language Journal* for October, 1950:

Not much can be said in favor of encouraging the opportunity to study world languages if any considerable

number of those who take advantage of it are rewarded only with failure. Better that a few . . . get by with an auditor's grade and credit for a semester than that the morale and good will of hundreds of students be destroyed. Dissatisfaction with language study on the part of any sizable group over a period of years can only produce a citizenry hostile to offerings in world languages as requirements at any level of schooling, and apathetic to them even as electives. The students in the classes of today are the taxpayers and parents of a dawning tomorrow. . . .

Experimental evidence from high schools in several states shows that a single class of enthusiastic graduates can increase voluntary enrollments in world languages from 100 to 300 per cent within three years, and that, conversely, a single dissatisfied generation of new alumni can decrease the enrollments in similar amount, regardless of college admission requirements or changes in university entrance examinations. Pp. 450-451.

Maybe we can get some help from leaders in the fields of educational psychology and philosophy. What are some of the current practices recommended? Do they apply in the area of foreign language teaching? If we accept their statement that we are primarily teachers of boys and girls before we are teachers of subject matter, then the question is redundant. For many this may mean a sudden change in teaching technique if we are to retain foreign language in the school program. Immediately we are faced with the problem of meeting the needs of the individual, of taking each pupil where he is, and helping him to grow to the full extent of his ability. That means individual attention, and ability grouping. In a large foreign language department one might organize two or three classes according to ability level of the pupils, but there are few schools with that many pupils in any one half grade of foreign language instruction. We may have to follow the example set by our colleagues in the elementary school, and divide each class into ability groupings, no longer can we set one academic standard for the class, and indiscriminately fail those who do not come up to the standard. Instead of failing them, we must try to help or salvage (if you please) those who cannot meet the standard within a certain time limit. Don't worry or be frightened about the teacher your pupils will get next semester. Let the next teacher take the youngster where he is and carry on from there. The college instructors are in this too. No longer do they raise their eyebrows in horror at the "inadequate" preparation given stu-

dents in the high school. They are sensitive to our problem, and have gone a long way in an effort to help us. Some local universities now give students a placement test. If the test shows that certain work must be repeated, the pupil is not penalized, but is given full college credit for whatever course he must take over. The good student who passes more than the two year placement test receives a bonus of college credit.

I tried to sell this idea to a high school principal. His school had about 800 foreign language pupils enrolled one semester. Over 16% of them failed. Nevertheless, he was quite satisfied. A university had just written him a letter saying that the three foreign language pupils from his high school were doing excellent work at the university. That semester 132 pupils in his school failed in foreign language. To him the fact that three pupils were doing well in college justified the high academic standards for all high school pupils in the foreign language program.

We are being challenged to take care of individual differences and to teach according to ability groupings. We should never have taught otherwise, and we must accept the challenge.

Pupils must be made to feel secure within their groups, with the teacher and in their own continuing accomplishments. New learning experiences will not be effective unless the learner first has a feeling of security within the group and with the teacher. How do you create a sense of security in a pupil? You show a genuine interest in him as an individual; you give him successful experiences in the subject matter area on his personal interest level with objectives that he can accept. This may play havoc with the course of study or the prescribed number of lessons in the text book. Suppose we don't complete the required number of lessons! I think we could teach more foreign language successfully if we tried to cover less ground. In most of the text books the pupil does not have a chance to develop a sense of security in the use of new vocabulary or new constructions before he is immediately beset with the frustrating task of learning another new construction. For this reason we should have more plateau reading and more conversation.

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Our world travelers with a limited knowledge of grammar and an excellent working vocabulary will enjoy themselves more and will make a more favorable impression on others than the poor frustrated souls who have raced through the complete course of study and have little or no competence in the use of constructions or the vocabulary.

For many years we have given lip service to the need for a more functional approach to the teaching of grammar and the oral-aural method. This is no easy job for an inexperienced teacher who is anxious to work at the top level of his ability in a program of five or six foreign language classes a day. It is often the path of least resistance to revert back to the old Latin grammar type of teaching, or to organize a semester's program of "teaching for testing." This is the route to stagnation, and a drop in foreign language enrollment.

It is important here to comment on the training of teachers for teaching foreign language in the elementary school. It would be too bad to start this experiment on the elementary level without properly trained teachers. To put *some* high school teachers that we have now in the elementary school would only sabotage the whole program. It would be most unfortunate for us at this moment if boards of education would be convinced by Commissioner McGrath's speech on "Foreign Languages and World Affairs," and ask us to supply them with foreign language teachers competent to teach on the elementary level.

The United States Commissioner of Education has jumped the gun on colleges of education. In many teacher training institutions it is possible to get a B.S. of Ed. without any foreign language training whatsoever. Our schools are filled with these teachers (and many of them very good teachers) teaching language arts. One of the first jobs the foreign language teachers' associations must do is to get these teacher training institutions to reinstate or to include foreign language in their curriculum. Furthermore, the language arts methods courses on the elementary level will have to include a unit on foreign language methodology. Here we have the old "which came first, the chicken or the egg?" problem. Do we train the teachers first and then assign the teacher, or

do we create the class and then look for a teacher? Since the teaching of foreign language in the elementary school will be only a part time job, the most expedient solution might be to see to it that the language arts teachers acquire a minor in foreign language in the liberal arts college, and then take a short course in foreign language methods, either separate from or included in the regular elementary methods courses.

This is a challenge to the universities to be met in the not too distant future. Our immediate challenge is to revitalize, preserve, and extend our foreign language offerings on the secondary level. Are we well enough prepared and equipped to offer a continuing foreign language program from the fifth through the twelfth grade? . . . a program that will keep the pupil interested, stimulated, constructively motivated, secure and happy for seven years?

Secure and happy, indeed! In this area as foreign language teachers we may have failed as much as in the area of ability grouping and meeting the needs of children. Many of us have forgotten that children reflect the feelings and attitudes of the teacher. A teacher with a vigorous and wholesome personality insures normal behavior. Children starve emotionally when the teacher is too serious or tense. An unfriendly atmosphere in the classroom is like a heavy frost; it stops all growth. More learning takes place in a happy environment. If that is true, then we must see to it that a happy environment exists in the foreign language classroom.

Bossing in his *Teaching in Secondary Schools* says that "an important function of the school is concerned with the development of the affective nature of man." Knowledge of itself does not establish good behavior patterns. We feel more than we think. Through our experiences we acquire a large number of more or less generalized attitudes, which condition and, to a large extent, determine all future actions.

It is not enough to insure correct knowledge. That knowledge must have a definite feeling-set. Positive and full-charged attitudes must accompany intellectual awareness if education is to be effective.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Nelson L. Bossing, *Teaching in Secondary Schools*, Chicago, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952, pp. 15, 16.



Suppose the pupil is not a brilliant student. Have you given him a full and happy experience in the area of foreign language? Or will he be bitterly conscious of his failure and condemn you and the language for the rest of his life and that of his children.

I recall a poor student at one of our high schools. He had tried as well as he could to get his Spanish and the other high school subjects, but school was a little too much for him. He was going to quit and join the army. The teacher did not feel justified in giving him a passing grade; he really deserved a failing mark. In a moment of generosity she gave him a "D" and spent a few sleepless nights thereafter. About a year later she received a letter from the young man. He and several buddies had visited a Spanish speaking country. He had been the interpreter for the group and was tremendously uplifted by his success. Now he was studying more Spanish and had interested some of his friends in doing the same. Shall we call this an instance of bread cast upon the waters, or is it an instance of understanding and meeting the needs of the individual student according to his ability?

Do your pupils leave your class with a happy feeling of success? Dare you let your pupils enjoy their foreign language class? The pleasure enjoyed in the gratifying experiences of the foreign language class will be remembered long after they have forgotten what they learned in class. Are not attitudes, ideals, and appreciation as important or sometimes more important than subject matter?

I think this is a good time to close. A friend of mine said that there are three important features about a good speech; (1) a brief introduction, (2) a short summary, and (3) and most important of all, the introduction and summary should be as close together as possible. I have violated this third important feature, so let me summarize quickly:

What are some of the challenges to change that today's foreign language teachers must meet?

1. We are being challenged to sell our subject to the administration and to the public.
2. We are being challenged to provide worthwhile foreign language experiences for the non-college preparatory boy and girl.
3. We are being challenged to take our rightful place in all general education and curriculum conferences on the elementary and secondary level.
4. We are being challenged to make our professional organizations militant vehicles for the fostering of our worthy cause.
5. We are being challenged to prove that we understand growing boys and girls, and to teach these boys and girls first and the subject matter secondly, so that the classroom activity becomes an integrating real life experience.
6. We are being challenged to provide for individual differences and to provide learning experiences commensurate with the ability of the class or parts of a class.
7. We are being challenged to revitalize, extend, and preserve foreign language study on the secondary level.
8. We are being challenged to train and to provide a corps of teachers of foreign language for the elementary school.
9. We are being challenged to provide pupils with enjoyable and successful foreign language experiences.

You know and I know that these challenges are not too difficult for us to meet. When your principal has a really difficult job to be done, doesn't he come to *you* for help? And you never fail him, I know. But let me give you one more challenge to make the number round and even.

10. I challenge *you* to have an enjoyable and successful experience yourself in this endeavor. And the best of luck to you!

CLARENCE WACHNER

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## *What Do the Colleges Expect of the Entering Students in Modern Languages?*

I RECENTLY asked one of my colleagues to help me answer this question.\* He replied, "I have come to the point where I really expect nothing!" Of course he was exaggerating, but withal, there was a bit of seriousness in his answer.

For a rather long period of years during which tests were given the entering students for the purpose of placement, it was found that in round figures, less than one-third of the students who came to us at the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill, could be placed into the course which normally follows two years of high school French or Spanish; i.e., French 3 or Spanish 3. There were, of course, numerous exceptions. From some schools from forty to sixty per cent were regularly placed in French 3 or Spanish 3. Only very few schools consistently send us students who do as well or better than that.

The question resolves itself into this: What did this two-thirds who had to begin all over again lack that the one-third evidently did know? Or do we expect more than is reasonable from these entering students.

I have wondered whether or not we have been too exacting; perhaps we expect more than is reasonable; or is it possible that we place our standards too high?

Having examined the situation from numerous angles, I feel that I can with confidence, and some authority, honestly state that the answer to each of these conjectures is definitely "NO."

If I were one of the regular college professors who had never known the high school field, you might well question my reply on the score of ignorance of your field. (You note that I am here specifically addressing myself to high

school teachers.) But from having taught in high schools for many years and having trained teachers of both Spanish and French, for the high schools, for the past twenty-five years, I feel that I have a right to speak on the subject with some authority. And I am even now training some students for teaching in high school, which keeps me in touch with what is going on in your high schools. So you see that I am in a position to tell you what needs to be done to improve your work in order more nearly to meet with the expectations of the colleges—at least at the University of North Carolina.

1. Let us begin with one of the major fields. It lies in the preparation of the teachers! Let me hasten to say that I am fully cognizant of the fact that in many cases you are not to be blamed. I realize that many of you are teaching Spanish or French not from choice, but from necessity. I full well realize that only too often you teach French or Spanish because the Principal needs a French or Spanish teacher and in looking over your life history, he finds that somewhere in the distant past, you had a few French or Spanish courses! Ergo, he insists that you teach French or Spanish! Even in spite of your protests you must take the French or Spanish classes, if you would keep your position. So you do your best. Unfortunately, that is not good enough to give your students the necessary preparation.

2. Another reason for your inability to meet the needs of your students, even though you are, theoretically at least, prepared to teach French or Spanish, is the inadequacy of your college training. That goes for our institution too! I have for years struggled to raise the requirements for our students who are training to become language teachers. There is not time enough for thoroughly adequate preparation in the four years of college, what with all of the other courses required for a degree and certification, including the courses in education. In

\* A paper given before the Modern Language Section, North Carolina Education Association, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 7, 1952.

in addition there are the extra-curricular activities, which are also of vital importance in the training of every teacher. Let me hasten to say that I would not drop any of the background and cultural courses required. A foreign language teacher must have a wide range of knowledge to be successful. The day is coming when another year of study will be required of all students who are preparing to teach, not only foreign languages, but all high school subjects. In fact this is already true in many places. We must face the situation as it is now. Better preparation on the part of the teacher is essential to success.

3. Another factor which causes inadequate preparation on the part of the students is *haste*. Too many teachers are in too much of a hurry to "cover the ground." In your desire to "go through" the book, you do not spend enough time on any topic to give the students a mastery of the fundamentals.

4. This brings me to the next point. This haste leads to inaccuracy. You permit "well enough" to pass. You do not insist sufficiently on precision. This slipshod learning can easily ruin work that might easily be made very acceptable. In the placement tests a large number of students who might well have done more than satisfactory work made low scores because of slight errors which teachers have allowed to pass without correction. The work was "close enough"!

5. This precision in the students' work can, without too much effort, be achieved if the teacher will help them cultivate the habit of clear thinking and reasoning. Language is a logical and rational subject, especially as regards sentence structure. This thinking clearly can be taught through mutations, that is the changing of sentences as regards person, number, tense, mood, etc. One must admit that it is a slow process, but it pays dividends in learning, and the habits formed in clear thinking in language study will help in all other school work and in life, after school days are over.

6. You may attain this goal of clear thinking most effectively by giving your students more oral work. It is a speedy and efficient approach. More repetitions of correct forms may be made orally than in writing in the same amount of time. By having the students drill whatever

grammatical topic you may be teaching, through oral repetition you will be able to show them how to manipulate the material at hand so that they will get the *feel* of the expression more readily. This manipulation may be done with most common everyday expressions: e.g., the conjugation of various tenses of the verb *parler*, *travailler*, etc., *Parlez-vous français? Je travaille beaucoup; hablar, trabajar*, etc. *¿Habla V. español? Trabajo mucho*. These may be given in various forms. The questions may be answered in the singular or plural; in other tenses. If an irregular verb such as *faire* or *hacer*, is being studied you may use it in the most common idioms, again changing person, number, and tense. *Tener* lends itself to much drill. This type of drill gives the maximum number of repetitions in a minimum of time. What is of even greater value is that the students thus master the material most effectively and with the greatest of interest.

7. This oral drill should be used particularly to master the fundamental essentials. Spend more time on these fundamentals and less on the unusual constructions and expressions, such as having students write out the infinitive form of more or less unimportant idioms. Too often one hears teachers ask students to translate such idioms, always in the infinitive form, as: *avoir beau* (to be in vain), *en vouloir à* (to bear a grudge against), *s'en falloir* (to be wanting, to fall short); *darse vergüenza* (to be ashamed), *empeñarse en* (to persist in), *mandar a paseo* (to send one about one's business), and rare uses of *por* and *para*. The mere ability to translate such idioms in the infinitive form is of no great value. Even though the students could translate every one of them correctly, unless they know how to put them into various forms using different persons, tenses, etc., they would be wasting time. Unless they learn how to use these idioms in forms needed for conversation or for writing, they are wasting much time.

8. Above, the matter of interest was briefly mentioned. Interest on the part of the students is of prime importance. There is nothing that makes the study of a foreign language more dull and uninteresting than mere memorization of vocabularies, rules and paradigms. It is through oral drill of the material that you can add the needed interest which makes for better learning.

The students get a real thrill from being able to express themselves in the foreign language. Give them some simple expressions the first day. Send them home from the first class with: *Comment vous appelez-vous? Où demeurez-vous? Comment allez-vous? Qu'est-ce qui arrive? Votre père comment s'appelle-t-il? ¿Cómo se llama V.? ¿Dónde vive V.? ¿Qué tiene V.? ¿Qué pasa? ¿Cómo se llama su padre?* The students will be thrilled to go home to their parents boasting that they have learned to speak French or Spanish the first day!

9. Oral work helps in the comprehension of reading matter. You will be able to get students to understand what they read without translating every word they read. This can be done. Many teachers are sceptical about this in the early stages of the study of a foreign language. It is precisely in the early stages that it is best to begin simple reading. I had one teacher, one of the outstanding teachers in the state, who was among these sceptics. I succeeded in getting her to try this approach. She did so, hesitatingly, and after some halting attempts to use this method, she has finally come to realize that her students read far better and with more pleasure than ever before under her old method of straight translation. It cannot be denied that translation is important, but there is no need of putting every foreign word into an English word. That results, not in translation, but in transliteration, which is an entirely different matter.

This type of preparation will bring about results which will give the students the knowledge of the fundamentals which we expect them to know when they enter college. With such knowledge, thoroughly acquired in the high school, they will be able to carry on successfully in college. Briefly summarized these fundamentals are:

1. A reasonably decent pronunciation. The more difficult sounds must be carefully drilled, with numerous repetitions until the students no longer massacre the common sounds; in French the vowel sounds of the vowel triangle; in Spanish such sounds as *ñ, b, v, r, rr, ll*, etc. Corrections can be quickly and effectively made through much oral drill. Drill the sounds in

isolation first and then in words and finally in sentences.

2. A knowledge of the regular verb conjugations and the most common irregular verbs; an ability to use the correct verb form to agree with the subject; an ability to use the correct auxiliary in French; the difference between *ser* and *estar*; the ability to use the required tenses and moods—the preterite, the imperfect, the subjunctive, etc. This last is of course necessary to use more often in the early stages in Spanish than in French, in which language it need not be too carefully studied and drilled in the early stages.

3. An ability to use, with a reasonable degree of accuracy, such constructions as the personal pronouns, the demonstrative adjectives and pronouns, etc., in both languages. It is especially important in French to teach thoroughly the uses of the partitive.

4. We do not expect the students to have a working knowledge of the difficult and unusual idioms, nor a very wide vocabulary. If they have an active vocabulary of from 500–1000 words—I mean words that they really know how to use freely, and a passive vocabulary of from 1500–2000 words, we should be very well satisfied and the students will find that they will not have too much difficulty with their college language—whether it be French or Spanish.

5. There is one other point that I should like to make. It may be entirely superfluous to most of you, but there are many schools in which no homework is assigned to students. Because they have not been accustomed to studying at home, many of our students have no conception of what homework is. Unless they have some experience with homework they soon get lost in college where they have to study regularly or succumb to failure before they have been in college very long.

If your students achieve this minimum knowledge of the fundamentals with a reasonable degree of accuracy, you teachers, the students and we in the college who get the students from you, will be very happy. It is up to you to see to it that these minimum requirements are met.

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## Semantics for Modern Languages

WHATEVER the virtues of knowing the pluperfect subjunctive, failure to communicate can often be an embarrassingly simple matter. I shall never forget an incident that happened in a fashionable Mexican restaurant several summers ago. One evening, a friend and I entered the famous dining room and were courteously shown to a table. Fortified with a warming *apéritif*, we placed our orders for a certain meat dish with the piquant sauce which was the specialty of the house. A little later the waiter appeared with our order accompanied by a large bowl of hot peppered sauce of which the house was duly proud. Upon a nod from my friend, an amateur in the Spanish language and a master at pantomime, the *mozo* began to pour the liquid generously over his portion. In the half moment that intervened, my friend quickly realized that the famous sauce was drowning his meat into obscurity. He looked up instantly and made a halting gesture. The ingenious pantomime somehow failed, and the silent request was returned with an obliging smile—the sauce came down heavier than ever. “*Bastante!*” shouted my friend, who refused to give up his *pièce de résistance* without at least some resistance. This verbal request put a more obliging smile on our waiter’s face, and he answered it with a still more generous serving. “*Basta!*” I shouted, but it was too late—even though this put an instant stop to the sauce. When my now-irate table companion finally understood how his request for “Enough!” had challenged the waiter’s generosity, we both plunged into hearty laughter. The final plunge, however, was through the sauce and into the meat.

In similar ways we are confusing others as well as ourselves with language. Sometimes we say what we do not intend to say; other times we are understood to say what we did not mean. The net result is the failure of a mission—the mission of language to send our ideas clearly along to other individuals and to carry back their ideas just as clearly to us. Unfortunately,

our language is not doing us this service to the best of its capacity, and we who speak it must assume the blame. The solution to faulty communication is not only *speaking* other languages, but also *understanding* how language works. The modern languages provide excellent insights into the problems of communication.

The difficulty of translation, especially translation of idiom, was never so well illustrated for me as in a first year Spanish course. A serious young coed inquired how to say “He’s on the ball” in Spanish. This was during those first days of teaching when I was still unable to disguise the fact that I was stumped. But stumped I was! My task was to translate the slangy shade of meaning of “he’s on the ball” into equally vivid Spanish. She was waiting, so I offered this answer: “*El es listo*,” but feeling obliged to qualify what I had said, I added quite candidly that this meant “He is alert.”—not precisely the same thing. It was apparent she was dissatisfied with my answer and was determined to seek out one for herself: “Now, I can say ‘he is’ in Spanish, but how do you say ‘on the ball’?” “*En la bola*,” I replied, “but it doesn’t add up to ‘He’s on the ball.’” The young lady was momentarily baffled; I have never forgotten the incident and have since learned to give more complete answers. I have also realized that an understanding of the concept of idiomatic expression can serve as an excellent illustration of the arbitrariness of language.

The “moral” of this anecdote is not without its immediate, practical application. Any number of times we have been asked by our students: “Why do the French, the Spanish, or the Germans say it that way?” How many times have we answered simply that it is an “idiom” and, in so doing, felt that we brought the matter to its final destination? Fortunately, some of our students are bright or persistent enough to continue to ask why the Spanish say *hacer un viaje* (to make a trip) instead of



*tomar un viaje* (to take a trip), and to insist on being answered more explicitly than "It is an idiom." Without straining for literary effects in elementary language study, we must realize that if any appreciation at all of foreign phraseology is to be achieved, it must be grounded in a genuine understanding of the native's conception—his unique image—for expressing *his* feelings, *his* attitudes, and *his* ideas. This is the very point of departure with those who on one hand invest the word *idiom* with an aura of magic and those on the other who set up quasi-mathematical equations between idioms in two languages for expressing a similar idea or feeling—blithely translating without explanation from one language to another. It is not too much to hope that one may see beyond his own linguistic giant and recognize the more vivid imagination in the Spanish or French way of saying it. During each semester I make the following survey of all my Spanish students: "Which seems to you a more imaginative concept for having a whale of a good time—'to paint the town red' or its Spanish counterpart 'echar la casa por la ventana'?" The first signs of semantic maturity are found in the unanimous agreement I have received up to now in favor of the Spanish "to throw the house out of the window." Here is an example not only of tolerance for the idiomatic habit of others, but also of an appreciation of their imagination, their concepts, and their unique sense of metaphor. To understand that an idiomatic invention contains an image which the American has created according to his unique imagination and the Spaniard according to his, is a step away from linguistic confusion and in the direction of a more intelligent attitude towards all language. The modern language classroom is richly provided for clarifying language and developing more workable habits of communication. The student who asks why one says *hacer un viaje* in Spanish rather than *tomar un viaje* can be given a satisfactory answer: *To take* in English is defined in one of its central meanings as *to grip* or *to grasp*; yet in English we combine this word with the word *trip* and understand by the combination something which the parts do not mean separately. (What about *to catch a train*?) If such a scheme can be constructed in one's own language and used for general com-

munication, why can't the Frenchman *faire un voyage* or the German *eine Reise machen* or the Spaniard *hacer un viaje*?

Likewise, the modern languages are full of examples of connotation. The student who is taught the expression *eine kleine Freundin* in reference to a neighbor's child had better use the phrase discreetly in front of his wife, who by suspicious nature coupled with a good knowledge of German, might be provided with ground for divorce, using as evidence her husband's allusion to his *kleine Freundin* or *mistress*. Assuming that our fictional student does not wish a divorce, an unfortunate misunderstanding has arisen because of connotation. Similar examples of connotation occur by the hundreds, and teachers should be on the alert to use them in developing a better semantic orientation to language.

A case can be made for the hypothesis that a foreign language, so long as its emotional connotations are unfelt, is more effective for communication than one's own "loaded" language. I recall the interminable controversies of my political science class dealing with such elusive terms as Socialism, Communism, and Capitalism. The byways of confusionism are many, and it is impossible to single out one major cause for the futility of such discussion. However, it is likely that this discussion can be made more purposeful by the substitution of fresh foreign terms for our own emotionally powerful ones. In fact, if we could carry on entirely in a foreign tongue, we would soon leave the battle of "Words, words, words" behind us and move on to genuine differences and the real issues. At this very moment, merely to utter such denotatively legitimate words as *red*, *left*, and *progressive* is enough to insure a traumatic shock in too many circles. It seems to make no difference that you are calling your friend whose nickname is *Red*, or that you are kindly directing a blind person by calling out *left*, or that you are speaking intelligently about your distaste for *progressive* education. Doubtlessly, the corresponding words in Spanish, French, and German carry no such disintegrating effects for the *English* listener. What better evidence is there than the fact that one can shout *rojo* and *izquierda* in Spanish until the cows come home, and there isn't even a nervous quiver in



the class? Occasionally a difficulty does occur—but not a semantic one: Some students may have translated *pink* for *red* and *right* for *left*. In the Spanish class these would be errors which could easily be corrected. But let our imagination play with these new possibilities in English!

It would be pure, but altruistic folly to propose an ideal system of communication requiring all Americans to speak Spanish, all Spaniards to speak English, all Frenchmen to speak German, and all Germans to speak French. In spite of the boon this would be for teachers of modern languages (or would it be?), we are not anticipating a miraculous transformation. But teachers of modern language are not so presumptuous—a little progress goes a long way. With a foreign tongue at our disposal, we can drive home an understanding of loaded terminology in our own language by pointing out that the foreign equivalents are often cold and harmless.

Conversely, we can mention in class (with discreet moral limitations) some words and expressions that a Frenchman or a German would never say—at least in public. Only some weeks ago, an attractive coed in elementary Spanish responded to my question of whether anyone knew some Spanish already. *Sí, señor*, I learned something in Mexico last summer: '*Dame un besito, por favor.*'" The suffix indicated her courtesy was impeccable; the prefix made her morals somewhat questionable. Fortunately for her, her classmates had not been equally blessed with the advantage of a trip south of the border. The entire group looked up to me for a translation, but my *semantic* appetite had been whetted: Would she make the same request in English—publicly? "*Señorita . . . , won't you tell the class what that means in English?*" The young lady turned several shades—but they were all shades of red (see paragraph above). "Please don't say it!" she begged me almost hysterically, "Please don't say it!" And of course I didn't say it. But I shall use the story in another class soon as evidence that we feel less strongly about words in other languages than we do about our own words—even when they mean the same things.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Teachers of language are provided with a perennial chuckle by some of our bolder students who come up after

By more than implication, matters of idiom, denotation and connotation, loaded terminology, and linguistic emotionalism all involve the question of context and meaning within context. Strictly speaking, context is the physical and/or verbal milieu in which the word is uttered. Recently, a colleague of mine, who was presenting an argument against texts giving sentences to be translated out of context, asked me how students are supposed to translate the French sentence (out of context): *Vous ne perdez pas de temps, monsieur* into English. Should they write (1) What the devil have you been doing with your time? or (2) You will never regret you did it! or (3) You're about the biggest wolf I've ever met! or (4) Congratulations on your topnotch efficiency, or (5) What a hog you turned out to be? There is more to this than the sheer amusement of language teachers. The great part of the beauty and richness of every language is its capacity for conveying different shades of meaning in a variety of situations. Why then should our students not be taught to share in the joy of composition (context of word here is not Eng. Comp. I) and linguistic creation?<sup>2</sup> Perhaps many of us will object: Dancing is lovely, but we must first teach our students how to walk. Yes, the problems of everyday language have yet to be solved. If modern languages with their novelty of expression for students can create an awareness of context and its importance in communication, those also-modern educators who are presently critical of languages in the curriculum may soon change their attitude.

Every day in our language classes we hear what can be considered the most intelligent utterance in the English language: "What do you mean?" While this may be nothing more than a simple request for translation, I am opposed to letting it remain as such. I suggest that we strongly recommend this question to our students, to be used *frequently* in reference to their native language as well. To be used

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class: "I bet I know some words in Spanish that aren't in the textbook." What is more, you can expect to hear a stream of scatology unless you can halt it with some quick repartie: "But we shall be examined on the textbook only."

<sup>2</sup> What is the metaphor of poetry but stirring images through language in new contexts?

*prior* to engaging in *any* disagreement, and *particularly* about language whose meaning they are positive they already understand. Whatever else justifies our existence, it would not surprise me if language teachers earned the reputation of "peacemakers" *par excellence*.

It is still not generally understood that language is a complex set of symbols arbitrarily accepted for the purpose of communication. Whenever we consider words more important than the noises they really are, misunderstanding is inevitable. "The word is not the thing" may strike one as an *enfant terrible* kind of statement; yet is it so obvious, considering we are often more enraged by what is said than what is done to us, when we succumb so easily to pleasing advertisements, when we refuse certain positions because we dislike the title, not the job? Students are not the only ones who have forgotten—or have never learned—that a world of actuality underlies language, and that words are socially agreed upon noises to express it. Forgetting this, we find ourselves in a bedlam of familiar, but confusing sounds, and chaos is the result of accepting the verbal symbol as an end in itself. Only such ignorance of language can explain the strong conviction that such a word *means* this and *cannot mean* anything else. It is only one move forward to the serious argument in which one individual tries to impose his particular definition on another, while the second person defends his own definition as the only true one: "No matter what you say, a Red is a Red!" Surely language is definable and the dictionary records definitions set up by comment assent. But why do we bark so loudly to prove that a Communist is also a kind of Fascist when we neither know ourselves the meaning of what we are growling nor dare assume our listener shares a meaning which is not there? The Spanish philosopher and man of letters, Miguel de Unamuno, stated this problem brilliantly in the parody of mankind by his dog Orfeo:

¡Qué extraño animal es el hombre! . . . No hay modo de saber lo que quiere, si es que lo sabe él mismo. . . . Y luego habla, o ladra de un modo complicado. Nosotros aullábamos y por imitarle aprendimos a ladrar, y ni aun así nos entendemos con él. Sólo le entendemos de veras cuando él también aulla. Cuando el hombre aulla o grita o amenaza le entendemos muy bien los demás animales. ¡Cómo que entonces no está distraído en otro mundo! . . .

Pero ladra a su manera, habla, y eso le ha servido para inventar lo que no hay y no fijarse en lo que hay. En cuanto le ha puesto un nombre a algo, ya no ve este algo; no hace sino oír el nombre que le puso, o verlo escrito. La lengua le sirve para mentir, inventar lo que no hay y confundirse. Y todo es en él pretextos para hablar con los demás o consigo mismo. ¡Y hasta nos ha contagiado a los perros!<sup>3</sup>

The magnitude of the problem is one to provoke despair rather than hope. The teacher of modern language would seem justified in doubling his efforts to teach the pluperfect subjunctive rather than enter into this kind of venture. But just a moment! One of the clues to the role of foreign language in promoting an understanding of language as a symbolic system lies in the very fact that the Frenchman says *j'ai froid*; the German, *mir ist kalt*; and the Spaniard, *tengo frío*, when each is cold. What example better substantiates the thesis that each group expresses the same general emotion and uses a different noise with which to do it? Here is evidence that language is arbitrary—invented and used differently by different peoples. We have heard the story of the American tourist who shouts "I am cold" until he is literally blue in the face—from actual cold—and wonders how Frenchmen, Germans, and Spaniards can be so dumb. Louder and louder he rages on, naïvely hoping that volume will substitute for lack of genuine understanding. *Cela va sans dire*, he may keep shouting in English until summer comes—it will get him neither heat nor sympathy.

We must not consider the suggestions set forth here as a replacement for what we are now doing in the teaching of modern language as it is generally understood. On the contrary! A well-timed semantic explanation of idiom, connotation, context, loaded language, and language as symbols should do much to fortify what we are now trying to accomplish. Besides, we would be making a genuine contribution to an understanding of all language and communication. Who could deny then that modern languages are truly modern!

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<sup>3</sup> Miguel de Unamuno, *Niebla* (Madrid, 1914). pp. 308-309.

## *Function and Equipment of a Language Laboratory*

SINCE the end of World War II a considerable number of universities and colleges have installed so-called language laboratories. This deviation from the previous, rather static, methods of teaching foreign languages was brought about first of all by the demands of World War II, the results obtained by the Army language teaching program, and by the development of electronic audio equipment. Many articles which have appeared in recent years in various language and audio-visual journals testify to the great interest in this modern way of teaching languages.

The language laboratory is here to stay. The events of World War II, the many service men who have lived among other nations and our new and leading position in the Western World have made it quite clear that there is a great need for persons capable not only of reading but also of speaking foreign languages. A recent survey of the training and certification of modern foreign language teachers in the State of Oklahoma, undertaken under the auspices of the American Federation of Modern Foreign Language Associations, clearly indicated a demand for greater oral facility and greater use of audio aids as well as training in their use.

It is quite clear that learning to speak a foreign language cannot be achieved in the traditional manner, with the traditional means and in the traditional time limit. Two semesters will in all probability remain the time limit which the majority of students will devote to their foreign language study. However, methods and means of teaching a foreign language can be improved by the use of the language laboratory.

The language laboratory is not, as the customary meaning seems to imply, merely a place for the instructor to experiment with methods and aids, although every instructor should try to develop new methods and to devise new aids. Unfortunately it is very difficult for the average

instructor to develop new aids, since these are largely based on electronic circuits and devices usually quite beyond his training. Unfortunately there also does not exist a central agency which could formulate the requirements of the foreign language teacher and then submit these suggestions to manufacturers of electronic equipment so that adequate aids could be designed and manufactured for language laboratory use. It would be worthwhile for the various language teachers associations to elect a committee whose task it would be to study the situation, to make specific suggestions and to induce the industry to develop such laboratory equipment at reasonable cost. Such equipment should be easy to operate, require little maintenance and repair and be devoid of all unnecessary frills. The average teacher is reluctant to depend on mechanical aids that are continually out of order or are otherwise inadequate.

What then is the function of the language laboratory? The language laboratory does not take the place of the classroom teacher, but rather supplements and exemplifies the classroom procedure. The language laboratory is capable of giving to the conscientious student that individual attention which he cannot get in the classroom; it is an approximation of the ideal situation of one teacher to one student. In the privacy of the language laboratory the student may listen over and over to the same phrase until he is able to mimic it perfectly, until he is able to comprehend its meaning at once, until he is able to give an instantaneous answer to a question. It is this type of drill which our students need most, but which we are unable to give them in the limited class period. Furthermore the adequately equipped language laboratory gives the student the opportunity to hear himself speak, to check his pronunciation against a master recording and to respond to given stimuli. In the language laboratory the student is alone; he does not

worry about presenting a poor spectacle before his class. For the slower student things may be going too fast in the classroom; in the laboratory he can catch up with the others.

The Department of Modern Languages of the University of Oklahoma has its language laboratory in operation since 1948. The following suggested procedure based on experience in the use of the language laboratory is offered in the hope that it may be helpful to other language departments and instructors who are planning a language laboratory.

Throughout the first year of foreign language study it should be a never-ending task to the instructor to teach students proper pronunciation and intonation. This can be done by recordings of the daily lesson or variations thereof containing the same vocabulary and grammar. The recordings should be made by cultured native speakers at a normal rate of speed. Each complete sentence should be followed by a pause of sufficient length to allow the student to repeat the sentence with proper speed. It will require some practice by the student to accomplish this. A single word should never be recorded for mimicry, but always a complete sentence.

However, before the student begins his laboratory work, the instructor should point out to him how the foreign language sounds differ from American English and how these sounds are best formed.

After the student believes that he has mastered the mimicry of the recorded sentences he should record both the master recording and his mimicry and then compare and make necessary corrections in his pronunciation. When a student imitates, he often does not hear differences between his imitation and the master recording. But when he can listen to both in immediate succession he will discover and learn to hear his errors.

By this time it is generally expected that the student can read without errors what he has learned through mimicry. That is not the case. Mimicry is relatively easy immediately after having heard a sentence spoken. It is a different matter entirely to read these same sentences without listening to the master recording. The next step for the student is to record each sentence, then play these back in-

dividually and to compare them with the master recording. Now when the student believes that he has mastered the reading assignment he records the lesson and turns it over to his instructor for grading and corrections. This can be done in conference with the student or the most important errors can be listed on a piece of paper. The student recording should be made a part of the regular class assignment. To this may be added questions and statements which require responses based on the grammar and vocabulary of the particular lesson. Straight listening to recordings without any other requirement or objective has a soporific effect. It is helpful to the instructor if the student also turns in the questions and answers in written form since that will facilitate grading. No doubt this method requires a considerable amount of extra work from the instructor; at the same time the instructor will be more demanding, and the results will be most gratifying to both students and instructor. This is especially the case when a beginning student tries some newly learned phrase on a native of a foreign country and finds that he is immediately understood and answered. We have all seen the sorry spectacle of students using a foreign language in some club activity only to find that we could not understand a word.

The procedure as outlined above is repeated throughout the course. This permits the teacher to spend more time on necessary grammar, dictations, essays, reading, poetry, etc. The text used in such classes does not need to be one featuring the conversational approach, but almost any good beginners' text can be adapted to this procedure. As a matter of fact a text featuring both conversational and literary material will show better results. Many text book companies now offer recordings to be used with their texts. In general, these recordings are good but do not give the instructor sufficient flexibility. Additional foreign language material as suggested above should be developed and recorded by the instructor.

The question arises, how should a language laboratory be equipped to permit a student to do all this? Such a language laboratory does not need to be an expensive affair. True, some universities with large funds have constructed language training facilities costing up to



\$50,000. Such equipment is nice to have but does not necessarily do the work better than more modest equipment.

In equipping a language laboratory it should be borne in mind to make it as flexible as possible. Theoretically it is fine to have fifty listening stations where students can push buttons and listen to different foreign language recordings of their choosing. But here the student is mechanically fed foreign language material at predetermined speed. The student has no further control. Should he have missed a word or a sentence, he must wait until the whole lesson is repeated only to miss the same thing again. A rather frustrating experience! The basic unit for the language laboratory is therefore still the ordinary record player to be played either through earphones or loud speaker, depending on the soundproofing. The language laboratory at the University of Oklahoma has both individual and multiple listening stations, but experience has shown that students definitely prefer to work alone and with disk recordings. This enables the student to play the same phrase over and over until he has mastered it.

Such record players are relatively inexpensive and can be installed for less than \$30 per unit. It is advisable to use three-speed turntables since at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  RPM considerably more can be recorded on a disk than at 78 RPM, but most commercial language recordings are recorded at 78 RPM. For recordings to be made in the language laboratory acetate disks are used. These do wear out rather more quickly than commercial disks. If, however, a master-recording is kept, a duplicate can be made at any time. Necessary for such recordings is a recorder that enables the instructor to cut and reproduce recordings at 78 and 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  RPM. Such a unit should be of good quality, but not be too complicated in its use.

The language laboratory is merely a multiplication of the basic record-player unit. How to arrange these units depends on the available space and funds. Best is the private soundproof booth. However, these units can be installed in tables with partitions that make the listening station at least semi-soundproof. In the latter case only earphones should be used with the record-player. One or two small rooms should be set aside for recording purposes.

It is of great advantage to equip the record-player with a microphone, so that the student can hear his mimicry of the disk through the earphones. This is a necessity in the semi-soundproof booth. For this purpose care must be taken that the record player has two simultaneous inputs: phono and microphone, each one with an independent volume control, which allow the student to adjust the volume of the microphone input to the volume of the recording or vice-versa.

For recording purposes for student-use the tape-recorder is best. Provision must be made on the record player to provide the input for the tape recorder. This can easily be done by any radio-repairman. Now the student is able to record the disk as well as his mimicry on tape which he can play back. The tape on the tape-recorder can be used over and over, and is therefore the least expensive to use. A great variety of such tape-recorders is now manufactured at reasonable prices. The student's final recording of the lesson is made on such a tape-recorder and the tape turned in to the instructor for grading. It is best therefore to issue each student a tape of about 15 minutes recording time, which is sufficient for most lessons. A small fee might be charged to amortize the cost of such tapes.

Through experience it has been found that most students should not work more than thirty minutes each session with recordings. After thirty minutes of intensive listening and mimicry a point of diminishing returns is attained. It is best to have the student report to the laboratory at designated times of his own choosing a minimum of four half hours per week on separate days. In our laboratory a student assistant is in charge. His duty is to check the students in and out on individual cards as well as to give them the material needed. Laboratory attendance is not compulsory but mandatory. The student must turn in a tape plus the written material which is graded.

This arrangement has worked satisfactorily and has prevented congestion in the laboratory. With the ten booths open from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. (except Saturdays when the laboratory is open from 8 to 12) 780 students per week can make use of the laboratory. If there should be more



students wanting to be admitted, each booth can accommodate two students through the use of double earphones, or the students can listen at 72 open listening posts.

Besides the regular foreign language material, all poetry, dialogues, etc. which the student is to learn to read or to memorize is also recorded. This is very important since poetry is often retained for many years and can give the student a basis from which to proceed in the pronunciation of foreign language words or phrases.

To the modern language laboratory can be added a room which can easily be darkened for

the showing of foreign language films. More and more such films are now being produced. They also supplement the classroom work and are especially valuable as sources of cultural and geographical information.

The biggest single item of expense for a language laboratory as described above is the sound-proofing. The recording device, depending on its quality can cost up to \$1,000 or more. Tape-recorders can be had for less than \$100 per unit, since for speech the frequency response does not need to exceed 60-7000 cycles.

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# *A College Reading Course in Modern Languages*

## I

THIS spring the faculty of Harpur College voted a general minimum foreign language requirement of 12 points for all Liberal Arts students. This requirement is to be covered in four semesters in courses of three hours a week. The faculty further expressed the wish that the program provide the students with more than merely linguistic training and that it be enriched with cultural content so that the students "would have something of lasting value to take away with them" even though they might never have the need or the opportunity to speak the language. The Humanities Division further passed the requirement of a third year of foreign language study for all humanities concentrators.<sup>1</sup> This course is to consist of a study of the masterpieces in the literature of the language concerned.

## II

The problem the modern language department now faced was that of adequately achieving the aims and wishes of the faculty within the narrow limitations imposed by the 12 hour requirement. We could not afford the dispersal of time and effort among too many aims from which modern language programs have suffered in the past: namely, the reading, understanding, writing, and speaking aims. We could streamline our program and make it effective only by concentrating on one of these aims. We unanimously agreed that this should be the reading aim. By sharply subordinating the other objectives we hope to attain the reading aim effectively within a program of 12 hours. This will require the reduction especially of the study of grammar to the degree where it is merely functional to the reading aim. While we do not pretend to know precisely how much active grammar is necessary for effective reading, we are convinced that it must be much less than has traditionally been assumed. We thus agreed that the study of grammar texts

should, at the latest, be completed by the middle of our second semester (allowing for some variation among the languages). The remainder of the second term will be devoted to readings of graded difficulty and mature content. The third semester will be devoted exclusively to reading source materials of some maturity of style and intrinsic value. The reading program is intended to culminate in the fourth semester, where the content shall be such as to reward the student for his preparatory efforts in the preceding semesters. It will consist of material selected from a wide range of subjects: music, art, history, the social sciences, philosophy, excerpts from the masterpieces of literature, and, especially in French and German, from the sciences.<sup>2</sup>

Specifically, the proposed language reading program for the first two years will have the following pattern which shall be common to all languages:

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE.....LANGUAGE. First Term. (3)

The basic vocabulary and the essentials of the grammar and the structure of the language necessary for a reading knowledge. There will be some oral work, but those students aiming toward a speaking knowledge of the language should supplement this work with elective courses in Conversational....

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE.....LANGUAGE. Second Term. (3)

Rapid completion of the language study of the first term; emphasis on graded readings of intrinsic literary value and mature content.

11. READING IN.....LITERATURE AND CULTURE. (3)

Reading selected material in literature of some maturity of style; outside readings. Prerequisite: Language 2 or 2 years of H.S. language.

12. SURVEY OF.....LITERATURE; READING OF MATURE CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC PROSE. (3)

<sup>1</sup> This was accomplished largely through the efforts of Dr. Bernard F. Huppé, the chairman of the Humanities Division, whose field is English literature and who took the initiative in this matter.

<sup>2</sup> Elective conversational courses are provided for students who desire a speaking knowledge of the language.

Survey of . . . . . literature; reading mature prose in cultural subjects and science; outside readings. Prerequisite: Language 11 or 3 years of H.S. language with comprehensive examination.

### III

The need for good grammars for reading was felt in the various languages. Such grammars will be wanting as long as the traditional grammarian's viewpoint dominates the field. While further knowledge and experience may be necessary to determine the kind and amount of grammar that may be necessary for reading, it seems clear that a fresh and original approach to the material is essential if effective reading-grammars are to be written. The authors must keep the functional reading aim rigorously in mind and dispense with material that does not serve this requirement. On the other hand, some material that is ordinarily overlooked in conventional grammars but seems clearly necessary for reading works of some complexity of style may have to be included.<sup>3</sup>

On general principles we thought that we should avoid the longer grammars in making our selections for the coming year. We shall be prepared to tailor the material in the grammars selected to suit our purpose, to reduce the stress on active memorization of declensions, conjugations of rare tenses of the verbs, and the like, and particularly to omit most of the exercises that swell the size of our grammars but fail to serve the reading aim.

The task of selecting suitable reading material for language reading courses presents familiar problems that vary from language to language only in detail. Ideally, the total reading of the first two years should be so chosen as to give the student a unified, unsentimental, and representative picture of the culture and the civilization of the people whose language is studied. It should enable him to a reasonable degree to appraise the cultural position of these people within the sphere of Western Civilization as a whole. It should familiarize him with the names of the outstanding figures the nation has produced and provide him with his first contact with the masterpieces of literature in the original language. Finally, on the more practical side, it should give him a fair idea of and an appreciation for what is to come in

the advanced courses and thus stimulate him to continue his studies in the language field, whether as a major or otherwise.

Some of the specific criteria we agreed to apply in our selection of reading material affected the matter of student appeal, of representation of material from diverse fields, and of variety in literary genres. We shall put particular stress on works of substance and recognized importance. Practical limitations will of course be imposed on our selection by the availability of the material in good text editions.

### IV

While accepting as axiomatic the principle that each instructor conduct the details of the reading lesson in a manner that suits his own inclinations and personality best, we were yet able to agree to certain broad and general procedures that would apply to the department as a whole. We decided that a maximum of one-half to three-fifths of the reading lesson should be spent on the prepared work and that the rest of the period should be devoted to sight reading. While willing to concede that there might be occasions on which the use of the "read-and-translate" method might have justification, we were of the unanimous opinion that its regular or even frequent use should be avoided. Instead, we chose to subscribe to the following general pattern, to which, however, no one is rigidly bound. The typical lesson would begin with chorus reading of the first five or six sentences under the leadership of the instructor. The instructor then asks questions in English on the passage read. Allowing the students time to read ahead silently, the instructor continues to ask questions on the rest of the prepared text, the answers being in English. Questions on the content of the text, if skillfully formed, should provide continuity in the lesson. In no event should the lesson be allowed to bog down. It should be kept moving forward at a sprightly pace so that the students will be busy in active participation. It is left to the ingenuity of each instructor to

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of this problem as it relates to German, cf. Meno Spann, "Jener Knabe kann nicht lesen," *The German Quarterly*, Vol. XXV, No. 1, January, 1952, pp. 5-15.

avoid monotony and to introduce variety and interest into the detailed procedure.

In order to expedite the sight reading we feel that it might be necessary for the instructor to assume the greater share of the work. (Pedagogically, the students might profit by his model readings and model renderings of difficult passages into English.) While allowing for variations in the procedure, the instructor would normally read the new material aloud in the foreign language and continue to apply the question-and-answer method in English as he proceeds. New material equivalent to half the assigned lesson could be covered in this way.

Provision for outside reading shall be made as early as the second half of the third semester. The students will be assigned units of about ten pages a week. On the day designated they take an open-book examination lasting from five to seven minutes. The questions are written on the board or mimeographed and the passages referred to broadly indicated by page and lines.

We feel that some general advice to students on preparing reading assignments might be helpful. Provided it is successful, we encourage each student to employ whatever method he may have discovered that suits him best as an individual. Generally speaking, however, we shall recommend the following procedure consisting of three stages:

1. A first and preliminary reading of the entire lesson or large units to get the general "drift" or first broad impression. Little, if any, looking up is to be done, the aim being to develop one's ability to make intelligent guesses on the basis of the context and by applying the principle of cognates and of word-compounds.
2. A second and thorough reading of the entire lesson or large units. Since the objective now is thoroughness and complete mastery, the vocabulary must be consulted whenever necessary.
3. A third reading for polish and smooth mastery and the attainment of a clear and unified impression of the entire assignment.<sup>4</sup>

We have decided to permit writing in the margin, but to discourage interlinear notations because of the tendency of the eye (and the brain) to follow the path of least resistance around the foreign text.

## V

Knowing how easy it is to subscribe theoretically to a new system of teaching and yet quite innocently continue to test according to older methods, we shall take particular care that our new examinations are so constructed as to remain consistent with the espoused reading aim. We expect that these examinations will have the added effect of emphasizing this aim in the minds of the students. Even at the earliest stages we will keep questions dealing with active grammar and translations into the foreign tongue down to a bare minimum. Indeed, some feel that we could dispense with these entirely. On the other hand, we feel that the greatest part of the examination, beginning with the mid-term examination of the first semester, should be devoted to reading and reading alone. There are many arguments against the practice of requiring complete translations of entire passages. Such translations are tedious to do and uneconomical as a testing-device, since perfectly obvious phrases have to be translated. In addition, they are difficult and time-consuming to grade, particularly if one strives for a high degree of objectivity. Consequently, we shall favor the type of examination which requires the students to give answers in English to carefully constructed questions on passages appearing on the examination.

We believe that content questions should appear on the examinations as soon as is feasible. We have experimented with these and have had excellent results. Thus, on a second-semester German examination we presented the first stanzas of several famous poems read in the class text *36 German Poems* (Houghton Mifflin) and asked questions like the following:

- A. 1. What is the title of this poem?  
2. Who wrote it?  
3. What philosophical problem does it deal with?
- B. 1. What kind of poem is this?  
2. What is the rest of the story?
- C. 1. What type of song is this?  
2. What famous composer set it to music?

<sup>4</sup> Cf. F. R. Whitesell, "Learning to Read a Foreign Language," *Monatshefte*, Vol. XLIV, No. 2, Feb., 1952, pp. 100-107.

Similarly, in the third semester where *The Gretchen Episode from Goethe's Faust* (Houghton Mifflin) is read, we constructed an examination on the following pattern:

*Directions:* Read, identify the speaker, and give the gist of what is said, explaining the circumstances. Do *not* translate the entire selection!

1. Ich gäb was drum, wenn ich nur wüsst,  
Wer der Herr gewesen ist!  
Er sah gewiss recht wacker aus  
Und ist aus einem edlen Haus.
7. Meine Ruh ist hin,  
Mein Herz ist schwer;  
Ich finde sie nimmer  
Und nimmermehr.
14. Komm! Folge mir! Liebchen, fasse Mut!  
Ich herze dich mit tausendfacher Glut:  
Nur folge mir! Ich bitte dich nur dies!
16. Sie ist gerichtet!
17. Ist gerettet!

It can be seen how much more readily advanced readers, such as *The German Heritage* (Holt), lend themselves to content questions of this kind. The following questions from one of our recent examinations will serve as examples:

- II. B. Freude, schöner Götterfunken,  
Tochter aus Elysium,  
Wir betreten feuertrunken,  
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum.  
Deine Zauber binden wieder,  
Was die Mode streng geteilt;

Alle Menschen werden Brüder,  
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

1. State the author and the title of this poem.
  2. What famous symphony does it end?
  3. What do the last four lines say?
- D. Wagner's Operas.
- a. Vor Anker alle sieben Jahr',  
ein Weib zu frei'n, geht er ans Land:—  
er freie alle sieben Jahr',  
noch nie ein treues Weib er fand.
  1. What opera is this taken from?
  2. What does the selection tell us?
- F. Ich lehre euch den Uebermenschen. Der Mensch ist etwas, das überwunden werden soll. Was habt ihr getan, ihn zu überwinden? . . .
- Was ist der Affe für den Menschen? Ein Gelächter oder eine schmerzliche Scham. Und ebendas soll der Mensch für den Uebermenschen sein: ein Gelächter oder eine schmerzliche Scham.
1. Name the author and title of the work.
  2. What does the passage say?
  3. What, in common terms, is the author's general message to us?

Pedagogically significant, too, is the tendency of content questions to lead the student's attention, as his reading ability grows, progressively away from mere concerns with language to those which should be the ultimate aim of reading: the concerns with substance.

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## Intensive Language Courses: Content and Techniques

IT CAN be maintained as a broad generalization that there are three principal ways to go about learning to speak a foreign language. The first way is often called the "natural" method. It consists of nothing more than the imitation of native speakers with whom the learner is placed by circumstance in frequent and more or less intimate contact over a considerable period of time. The second, or "intellectual" method is based upon book-study, performed at intervals more or less regular in spacing and duration, repeated to the point of memory saturation sufficient to obtain whatever end result may be desired. The third method is a compromise combination of the two just mentioned, regulated as required to accommodate the individuals' capacities, opportunities or ambitions. It is, of course, this third or mixed method which predominates at present in our educational institutions. In practice, a great number of variations in detail exists, of which the most significant is certainly the variation in the amounts of time allotted in the curriculum for foreign language study.

Today most college programs continue to assign the traditional three hours per week to the first year of this subject. Experience with the Army Student Training Program induced many institutions to adopt what have come to be known as Intensive Language Programs. The distinctive feature of these programs is the relatively great increase in class hours accorded to the first year of foreign language study. Such courses allow variously six, nine, twelve, or even fifteen class hours for the first year course. One must not forget that for many years several Summer Schools have been offering total programs devoted exclusively to one foreign language, although few such programs are offered at the elementary level. The characteristic feature of these specialized summer programs is their totality and the splendid results obtained confirm the basic validity of concentrated, intensive language courses. By

comparison with these summer school programs, the intensive foreign language programs recently established in our colleges are far too often but a pale approximation. They can be called intensive only by euphemism. Nevertheless, they do most certainly constitute a notable advance over the inadequate and ineffective 3-hour course.

Obviously, then, the term *intensive* as a designation applied to foreign language courses has already become a highly elastic, equivocal expression. It is being used indiscriminately to denote such widely different courses as those so called in academic programs, where 250 hours of class attendance is the yearly norm; while at the same time it is applied also to the Army Language School program, amounting to 1350 hours of class work. Curiously enough, it has never been used to refer to the prolonged study of a language spaced over many years, as in the case of a student who begins French at seven and pursues this study continuously for ten years. Such a student will have spent 1750 class hours on French and provided the instruction has been competent, he will unquestionably command the language with ease. Evidence of the effectiveness of this extended kind of intensive language learning is abundant among Europeans, who frequently follow this procedure. In spite of the fact that this "slow but sure" extensive method is both effective and easier for the student, it has never been highly esteemed in the United States. It runs counter to the national psychology of impatience with piecemeal processes. The approved American way is to settle down and compress ten years of distributed effort into one year of total concentration. Undoubtedly the "total immersion" method produces quite astonishing results and satisfies our national penchant for specialization. The grave danger lies in the possible deception concealed in the indiscriminate use of the term *intensive*. This is a problem of semantic distinc-

tion which I have no intention to try to solve here.

In the typical Liberal Arts college the introduction of a genuine intensive language course presents many complicated problems of administration. It ought not to be, it cannot be contemplated unless the necessarily violent displacement of the sacrosanct trinitarian organization of class scheduling is fully accepted as a preliminary step to implementation. For the sake of brevity, let us assume that all the administrative hurdles have been successfully overcome. You have been given the administrative green light to introduce an authentic and resolutely intensive beginning course in Russian. You have permission to recruit twenty-four carefully selected freshmen and sophomores for a year course, 25 hours per week in the classroom—a total of 850 hours for the academic year—with 30 hours college credit for the year's work. Your recruits have been forewarned that academic failure will require postponement of transfer to other subjects until the following semester. In spite of this warning, you have rounded up your full quota of bravely enthusiastic students. For the most efficient oral instruction, your pupils are divided into three sections of eight students each. On the administrative front, your victory is complete. If you are at all susceptible to the agreeable sentiment of well deserved success, this is the proper moment to indulge this sentiment. For the treacherous passage that leads from administrative victory to instructional triumph lies just ahead of you and navigation of it will require much hard work and infinite patience. You are now free to proceed with the construction of the course—the content and the methodology. As you will soon discover, your hard-won freedom is definitely of the existentialist variety—a freedom composed half of anxiety and half of plain blood, sweat, and tears.

At the outset, you will encounter the textbook problem. There are at the present time no commercial textbooks geared to supply adequate quantities of material for a genuinely intensive program in any language whatsoever. Remember that your classes will meet five hours per day five days per week and you will realize that a text designed to provide 100 class

hours of material will serve only for one month of intensive instruction. The formal organization of such a text will also prove unsatisfactory and no amount of ingenuity in reorganizing the materials can compensate for the basic weakness, which is, of course, a wholly insufficient quantity of exercises, both oral and written. If you seek to solve this difficulty by introducing a different text each month, you will soon discover that you are losing the considerable advantage of continuity of sequence both in the presentation of grammatical patterns and in vocabulary repetitions. There can be but one solution for your dilemma. You will have to write your own textbook. *Per aspera ad astra.*

The primary consideration in preparing your text will be the arrangement of the lessons into orderly and effective units of instruction. It will be logical to set up lessons in five divisions each—one division for each class hour. It is highly important that each of these five divisions or units should be homogeneous in form and content, so that the method of instruction may be reasonably uniform throughout the class hour. The sequence in which the five units follow one another is also important. It is not sound pedagogic practice to schedule previously prepared memory retention exercises at the end of a day's work, after several intervening classes. Memorized work comes best at the beginning of the class day, when the student's mind is relatively alert; the intellectual operations of translation and composition can be carried on satisfactorily under less relaxed conditions.

Thus the first hour of the daily lesson may best be devoted to vocabulary building through topical dialogues, in which all new vocabulary is first introduced—an optimum daily load of 25–35 new words. Materials may best be set up with the Russian text in the left-hand column parallel to the corresponding English in a right-hand column. The subject matter of these dialogues must be designed to the measure of the ultimate purpose of the course. If this purpose is purely practical or technical, the dialogues will reflect this practical concern with every-day living and in addition will introduce the vocabulary of the particular specialization envisaged. In a Liberal Arts

program, cultural subject matter ought eventually to predominate, without excluding the basic vocabulary of highest frequency. The true measure of success in composing the dialogue is the degree of integration achieved between linguistic substance on the one hand and ideational significance on the other. To clothe the bare bones of grammatical patterns with flesh and blood is a very fine art indeed and one which tests severely the ingenuity of the most experienced professional pedagogic talent.

The classroom techniques for teaching these dialogues are many and varied. In the early stages, they must be memorized outside the classroom following a brief preview on the previous day, in which the student repeats each sentence mechanically after the teacher. Students can dramatize the dialogue by reciting in pairs or by acting out the story content, while the teacher intervenes only to correct pronunciation. The ultimate aim is to transform mere parroting into free conversation and the appropriate moment to begin this very delicate operation must be discovered by the sensitive intuition of the teacher. Once this hurdle has been overcome, the teacher must assume the role of the passive helper, stimulating the students to talk as much as possible, while he himself intervenes as little as possible. The use of cartoon drawings to recall the subject matter of the dialogues is a helpful device to bridge the gulf between rote memorization and free conversation.

The dialogue hour is the heart of the oral instruction. Its linguistic patterns require precise and extensive analysis and this operation will be the business of the second class hour, which we shall call Grammar Analysis. In the early stages, English is used as the medium of instruction, since the function of this instruction is to explain by analogy between the known language (English) and the unknown language (Russian) the grammatical structure of the latter. The aim here is to diminish the use of English as soon as feasible; but abstract grammatical terminology is one of the last acquisitions to be expected and the introduction of such abstractions in a foreign tongue too early can only retard the progress of even the best student.

It is axiomatic that no grammatical principle should be discussed without adequate exemplification in sentence context. The more examples the better; but the vocabulary employed should, in so far as possible, be restricted to terms already familiar to the student. The exact sequence of presentation of grammatical patterns offers room for wide difference of judgment; but once established, the sequence will govern not only the grammar analysis hour but also the work of the entire daily lesson as well. In this respect, the grammar analysis class is the focal point of the day's work. All the other units must be integrated with it linguistically, just as all vocabulary must be related to the dialogue unit. The number of grammatical patterns that can be profitably discussed in each class can only be discovered by trial and error; just as the sequence in which they are presented must depend largely upon extensive experience. The question is frequently raised as to whether grammatical patterns are best explained before or after they are applied in sentences—in the dialogue or in written exercises. Something can be said for both the inductive and the deductive approach to this problem and a judicious mixture of both is certainly advisable. Various experiments tend to show that students retain grammatical patterns best when these are derived from previously learned vocabulary.

Because the teacher does most of the talking in the grammar analysis class, formal grammar can be presented quite satisfactorily to a large group of students. Thus you will find it entirely feasible to bring together all three sections of your twenty-four Russian students into one class for this type of instruction. A brief period should be reserved to answer student's questions, but the form of instruction is essentially that of the lecture class, with the teacher as the central agent.

A good pedagogue knows that students are normally quite tired at the end of two consecutive hours of class. Therefore, the third hour of the day will provide some degree of relaxation. This is the time to introduce audio-visual aids—recordings, either disk or tape, films, flash cards, etc. Quite appropriate also is group singing, which, if properly exploited, is a splendid device for perfecting pronuncia-

tion. Soon after the third month of the course the important subject of intonation should be introduced. What the linguistic scientists refer to as "voice qualifiers" should be fully explained and the students should be trained to recognize and to reproduce the often subtle shades of meaning conveyed solely by vocal inflection. Some portion of this third hour should be utilized for review of the dialogue materials, reconstructed in the form of question-and-answer drills or as short dictation to train the student to hear and spell correctly.

The work of the first half of the day is terminated at the end of this third class hour of miscellaneous types of instruction. After a well deserved recess for lunch and relaxation, the students and teachers should be physically refreshed and mentally alert for the class in Functional Grammar which occupies the fourth hour. The purpose of the Functional Grammar hour is to provide intensive practice in the application to sentences of the grammatical patterns that have been presented in the Grammar Analysis class. For a portion of the period, the teacher reads aloud short carefully selected Russian sentences, which, after translation by the students, are analyzed to illustrate the grammatical patterns involved. For the remainder of the period, the teacher reads aloud short English sentences, which the students will translate at once into Russian. Mistakes should be corrected and discussed. For the student all the work is oral, with the teacher writing at the blackboard as circumstances dictate. At first, the explanations will be made in English, with gradual transition to Russian as the student's facility increases. In choosing sentences to exemplify grammar rules, care must be taken to avoid dull, uninteresting examples such as: "This is the penholder of my uncle," or "The black cats are on the red roof of the white house." There is no surer way to kill student enthusiasm.

Functional Grammar work is a variety of oral composition, performed as spontaneously as possible, with the immediate purpose of training the student to manipulate automatically the machinery of the foreign language and to become sensitive to syntactical relations and morphologic alternations. If the student fails to acquire sufficient control of this linguistic

machinery, he will always remain fearful of his errors and consequently hesitant in speaking. Through Functional Grammar he may learn to check the correctness of his utterance and he will gradually achieve that assurance in his own abilities without which he can never speak naturally in any foreign idiom.

The fifth and final class of the daily lesson is devoted to formal reading and translation, from Russian to English and then from English to Russian. This is an ancient, tried and tested method of instruction that even the most radical methodologist finds indispensable in any well-rounded program. The wise teacher always places this type of work last in the daily sequence of classes because it is essentially an intellectual operation and unlike memorization, it can be performed quite successfully under or in spite of the handicap of considerable mental fatigue. In the earlier lessons, the Russian passage should contain no words not previously introduced in the dialogue unit. This restriction may be gradually modified as the course progresses; but new words should be listed with their English meanings immediately above or below the passage. Russian words first introduced in the reading exercises must not be abandoned forthwith and disregarded in future lessons. Any word worth using at all is worth repeating at well chosen intervals, even if the intention is to induce merely passive recognition. Compilers of elementary language texts must be willing to sacrifice their creative literary sensibilities to the psychological fact that memory retention is based fundamentally upon repetition. For the first few months of language instruction the student's vocabulary requirements are quite prosaic; an active vocabulary of 1500 words at the end of the fourth month should delight the most ambitious teacher.

It is a cardinal principal that the English translation passage be derived from the Russian reading passage, that both the grammatical patterns and the vocabulary be closely articulated one with another. These English-Russian exercises should be so presented that they serve to emphasize the difference between merely literal translation and genuinely idiomatic equivalence. Such instruction demands that the teacher be as nearly bilingual as possible, since



it requires a thorough idiomatic command of both Russian and English and an almost equal *Sprachgefühl* for each. However, the native Russian instructor whose English is wholly insufficient to permit him to handle the translation class may very well do a very superior job in the dialogue hour. In fact, it is amazing to observe the facility with which some teachers solve the problem of communicating ideas to students whose language is almost totally unknown to them. Recently in a dialogue class the word *rubashka* appeared in the Russian text; through a typographical error, the English text gave the equivalent as *short*. This puzzled the students and they asked their teacher to explain. For a moment he was stumped. Then he stood up, removed his coat and vest, dropped down his suspenders and pulled out his shirt from his trousers. "Vot, vot rubashka," he shouted, as he straightened out the flaps. It is unlikely that any of the students present will soon forget that particular Russian word. However, if it were applied to certain other articles of clothing, this realistic method might prove embarrassing. Certainly it would be disastrous to ask this excellent native teacher of dialogue to handle a class in English-Russian translation.

With the text material satisfactorily prepared to provide 150 daily lesson units of five hours each you are now free to attend to the many secondary matters for which provision must be made. The first of these will probably be the important and highly controversial problem of how best to introduce the teaching of pronunciation. Some part of every class hour will, of course, be spent in illustrating the tenuous variations between stressed and unstressed vowels, in elucidating the permutation of consonants, in demonstrating the phonetic structure of *yeri*. During the first few weeks the students will need a short pamphlet combining elementary rules of pronunciation with an exposition of the printed and written Cyrillic alphabet. Whether or not to use transcriptions and which system to adopt is largely a matter of individual judgment. But the simpler the system the better, because difficulties should never be multiplied and the finer shadings of pronunciation can only be acquired by prolonged day by day instruction.

There will be the question of oral and written examinations to be properly articulated with frequent reviews. You will want to know and the students will clamor to know precisely the rate of their progress. Every two weeks, at least, the measure of achievement must be taken and your staff must be trained to measure the achievement fairly and accurately. As you contemplate results obtained from day to day you will undoubtedly find yourself dissatisfied with either the content or the method of many of the units you have so laboriously created. The urge to revise and improve these units will possess you. You will realize the inescapable fact that the writing of a language text is a continuing process, that in a sense it is never absolutely finished. To keep your text abreast of the latest advances in teaching techniques and to incorporate discretely the occasionally assimilable findings of the linguistic scientists is a constant challenge to self-complacency and inertia.

Finally, provision must eventually be made for a second, a third or even a fourth year of Russian studies to follow upon completion of the intensive first year. Fortunately, such courses can be readily fitted into the customary Liberal Arts pattern of three scheduled classes per week so that you will be spared from any controversial administrative problems. In all post-intensive courses, priority must be given to oral activity in order to maintain the students' hard-won fluency. Without this continuing activity, the benefits derived from the intensive first year will be rapidly dissipated. At the same time, it is axiomatic that subject matter should constitute the basic concern of intermediate and advanced classes. The controlling factor must be, of course, the varying needs of the students concerned; whatever these needs may prove to be—science, history, belles-lettres, etc.—the method of instruction must insure the largest possible measure of student participation through the medium of the foreign language. Unquestionably, the most successful post-intensive language courses are the broadly inclusive area-type courses conducted according to the project method. Each student is assigned to investigate a topic of individual interest and under the guidance of the instructor, the entire class is induced to active oral participa-

tion. The successful conduct of the post-intensive courses requires exceptional pedagogic ingenuity, organizational ability of a high order and both a broad and a deep knowledge of an entire culture.

What I am trying to outline here as briefly as possible is the kind of intensive program every foreign language teacher would wish to live long enough to see in actual operation. Although I have drawn upon Russian in the specific instance, the method indicated is equally applicable to any foreign language, since the basic methodological problems are essentially identical for all. It is not intended to suggest that such a program would replace the present three hour beginning courses; these have and will continue to have their useful place in a Liberal Arts curriculum for the great majority of language students whose admitted or unadmitted purpose is to learn to read a foreign language.

The total concentration foreign language program should be elected only by those few students who wish to specialize, to attain an exceptional proficiency in comprehension and a genuine mastery of the spoken idiom. For admission to intensive courses students must be thoroughly screened for aptitude and their motivation must be, beyond reasonable doubt,

sincere and steadfast. The present world situation demands a vast increase in the number of young Americans competent to communicate effectively with peoples of many foreign tongues. The need is urgent and the time is short. To supply their minimum needs for reliable interpreters, radio monitors, etc., the Armed Services has reluctantly instituted several language schools providing intensive courses in a score of languages. I have tried to indicate here one practical way to produce competent foreign language speakers within the confines of a Liberal Arts program. That there are other ways to accomplish this end is evidenced by the fact that the University of California at Berkeley is now conducting a somewhat different but eminently successful intensive beginning program of twenty hours per week in Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Russian at its Institute of Slavic and Far Eastern Studies. At this juncture, our colleges and universities already possess the necessary human resources—the teachers and the students. All that is needed now to meet the challenge is a few more bold and adventurous administrators scattered throughout the country.

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## College Entrance Requirements and the High Schools

SINCE the teaching of foreign languages in American secondary schools owes its origin primarily to college entrance requirements, any changes in them has always had a significant effect upon enrolments and curriculum and instruction at the high school level. Only where schools have been able to find a broader rooting for their programs have they succeeded in maintaining—and sometimes even increasing—enrolments, despite the losses that changes in college policies were simultaneously producing in neighboring communities. During the last fifteen years, requirements have been modified so drastically that hardly a third of the institutions which formerly demanded at least two years of language work for admission make this requirement today.<sup>1</sup> Even medical schools, which formerly gave strong support to French, German, and Latin have noticeably relaxed their entrance requirements. Of the 79 leading medical schools in the United States, only 11 percent now specifically demand either French or German; none requires Latin, and 44 percent require no foreign language at all.<sup>2</sup>

In the same length of time, foreign language enrolments in the high school have decreased 39 percent, or roughly three percent per year.<sup>3</sup>

The situation as it stands today can be summarized as follows:

1. Since 1933, when the foreign languages enrolled 35.5 percent of the pupils attending public secondary day schools, the per cent of enrolment in the foreign languages has decreased to 21.5 percent. Because of the

increase in the number of pupils now attending secondary schools this loss is not so obvious as it would be if the high-school population were static. If the same percentage of high school students were enrolled in the foreign languages today as in 1933, however, the number of teachers and pupils would be almost twice as great as at present.

2. Percentage-wise, French and Latin enroll less than half so large a percentage of students as in 1933. German has been the heaviest loser. The per cent of enrolment here is only a third of what it was in the early thirties. Spanish has shown a net gain of two per cent, and is today the most popular of the foreign languages taught in public secondary day schools. However, it has not absorbed the losses to French, German, or Latin. If all students who formerly enrolled in these languages had transferred to Spanish, the per cent gain in Spanish would be eight times as great as it actually is.
3. At mid-century, Spanish enrolled 443,995 secondary school pupils, or 8.2 of the total number of young people attending public secondary day schools. The comparable figures for French are 255,375 pupils, or 4.7 per cent; for German, 43,025 pupils, or .8 per cent; and for Latin, 422,304 pupils, or 7.8 per cent. Italian enrolled 16,265 students in nine states.
4. At mid-century, twenty states reported offerings in general language with a total enrolment of 13,020 pupils. Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New Jersey report the largest number of students in this offering.
5. The total enrolment in foreign languages in public secondary day schools at mid-century was 1,164,699. The state with the highest percentage of enrolment in languages is Massachusetts (45.4 per cent), and the lowest, Arkansas with 5.5 per cent. French is

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Koch, "Language Requirements and Language Aims," *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 6, pp. 458-462, October 1949; Sarah Elizabeth Piel, "Present Trends in Foreign Language Requirements," *The German Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 12-16, January 1951.

<sup>2</sup> News and Notes, *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 2, p. 102, February, 1952.

<sup>3</sup> Mabel C. Rice, *National Summary of Offerings and Enrolments in High School Subjects*, Statistical Circular No. 294, No. 8, Office of Education, May, 1951.

strongest in Massachusetts; German, in New Jersey; Italian, in New York; Latin, in Delaware; Spanish, in New Mexico, and general language, in Pennsylvania.

6. Six states reported public secondary day school classes in Bohemian, Hebrew, Greek, Norse, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Swedish with a total combined enrolment of 5,739.

That the end is not in sight can be judged from the recent abolition of the foreign language requirement, even for college graduation, in many State colleges on the West Coast,<sup>4</sup> and even in such leading universities of the Midwest as the University of Minnesota. Although the desirability of language study, as an elective, is daily becoming apparent to more people, it is unlikely that the demand will become strong enough to reestablish blanket requirements in the immediate future. The American people are almost convinced that in case of necessity the Army can teach languages more effectively than either the college or the high school. In any case, many people in positions of leadership point to the millions of bi-lingual and recently naturalized Americans who, they feel sure, can easily be persuaded to serve their adopted country as interpreters or translators in any crisis. "Besides," they say, "The languages that are likely to be needed most, such as the Slavic, Oriental, and Near-Eastern, are rarely taught in our schools and colleges anyway." While none of these arguments is incontestible, the time required to convince people of their limitations is seldom available. For this reason, a nation-wide reversal of the trend is not predictable for the foreseeable future.

For the high schools, this means that a broader and deeper rooting for the languages in popular interest rather than in academic requirements must be found. Henceforth, the strength of the foreign language curriculum in secondary education is likely to depend far more upon popular demand from below than upon coercion from above. Although the means for meeting this challenge successfully

have already been demonstrated by many schools, including those which participated in the well-known Stanford Language Arts Investigation from 1937 to 1940,<sup>5</sup> the adoption of measures adequate to the need has been neither so rapid nor so widespread as it should be.

To some extent the delay in reconverting the foreign language curriculum is attributable to the slowness with which teacher training institutions—especially the universities—have been willing to modify their courses to make them more immediately serviceable to new teachers. For this reason the resolution of the Central States Modern Language Association, passed in 1949, deserves more attention than it has so far received. It urges a differentiation of foreign language requirements for college graduation as favorable to prospective teachers as most offerings now are to majors interested in taking a doctor's degree in philology or the history of literature.

It is doubtful, however, if even these changes will adequately serve the new status of the languages in secondary education. Although many students will enroll in high school classes merely as electives, a considerable number may later wish to continue their work in college. To date, no safe way has been found for predicting several years in advance what their futures will be, nor even what college or university they will enter. If the high school plays safe and offers only a predominantly college-preparatory course, the losses in enrolments at the end of each semester will keep the languages on a precarious defensive in at least two-thirds of the nation's schools. Over a third have a total school enrolment of less than 100 students, while nearly two-thirds have enrolments under 200.<sup>6</sup> More significantly, over 40 per cent of the students drop out of school entirely by the end of the second year.<sup>7</sup> It

<sup>5</sup> Walter V. Kaulfers, et al., *Foreign Languages and Cultures in American Education*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1942, 405 pages.

<sup>6</sup> *Statistics of Public Schools*, Biennial Survey of Education, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C., 1949, 80 pages; page 5, 22; *High School Staff and Size of School*, Circular No. 317, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C., 1950, 24 pages; page 13.

<sup>7</sup> William M. Alexander and J. Galen Saylor, *Secondary Education*, Rinehart and Company, Inc., New York, 1950, 536 pages; page 236.

<sup>4</sup> Ernest M. Wolf, "New Regulations Concerning the Foreign Languages in the State Colleges of California," *The Modern Language Forum*, Vol. 36, No. 3-4, pp. 73-80, September-December, 1951.



should be obvious that any solution, such as grouping students into college-preparatory and non-college preparatory classes would, even if a reliable basis for prediction existed, be wholly impractical in any but the very large city high schools—and then only in those languages, like Spanish, which currently enjoy large beginning enrolments.

The conscientious teacher in the smaller high school can often discover pupils who have the ability to do college-preparatory work as well as the means and declared intent to enter a university. To these he can often give special attention. Even here, however, two uncertainties constantly beset his work:

What college or university will the students enter? This decision is not always made until the senior year, and often changes after graduation. This is especially true in the case of young men selected for military service. Yet to prepare people for college *in general* is almost futile in view of the wide differences in methods and standards prevailing from institution to institution. A student of German who has been well-prepared for the University of Denver, for example, might find himself poorly prepared to hold his own in an intermediate class at the University of Colorado, and vice versa. The difference in emphasis in first-year classes is especially marked in these institutions. These examples could be multiplied indefinitely.

Again, how soon will the student be able to continue in college the language which he began as a teenager? In two-thirds of the nation's schools with enrolments large enough to support classes only in the first two years, the college-preparatory student has at least two years to forget his work before he enters college—many more years if he is a young man subject to the

draft. Rather than compete with "college-wise" students who completed the elementary course only a short time ago, he joins the ranks of the many who now prefer to start over in a new language in college, if such work is absolutely required.<sup>8</sup> Scarcely three students in a beginning class of 35 ordinarily continue in college in the same language which they began in high school.

Since the high school teacher has no control over the student after he has left his classes, the solution to this problem rests more with the college and university than with the secondary school. Many are already using guidance-placement tests to allocate new students to courses in which they are most likely to succeed. In cases of doubt, the decision—and the risk—are left to the student. In many cases, no penalty whatever in the way of a loss of credit is attached to the repetition in college of work done in high school. The basic principle is simply "finding good students wherever they are and helping them go where they wish to be." A wider implementation of this policy in institutions of higher learning would go far toward untying some of the knotty problems associated with "college entrance requirements and the high schools."

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<sup>8</sup> That this problem still remains unsolved can be judged from the following references: E. F. Angel, "Why Do Not College Students Continue the Foreign Language Begun in High School?," *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. V, pp. 500-503, March 1932; Vera E. Whitmann, "Continuance in College of High School Foreign Language," *The School Review*, Vol. 48, pp. 606-611, October, 1940.

## *A Five-Language Pronunciation Course*

THREE years ago the director of the Purdue radio station, WBAA, suggested a course which would help announcers cope with the pronunciation of foreign words and phrases. Other branches of training for radio work were available, but aside from biographical and geographical dictionaries and some books of foreign terms, there was little at hand for the announcer of a program of classical or semi-classical music or a news reporter. Even the books were often a disappointment, for when they did give the word sought, they often pronounced it by means of unfamiliar sounds or symbols.

To fill this gap, a course was projected, meeting three times a week for one semester, and devoted to the pronunciation of five major languages, French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Russian. The keynote was to be practicality: the most useful principles clearly presented and a selection of material serving both for practice and as a glossary of terms likely to be encountered. Time was divided as follows, an allocation which has proved satisfactory: French—four weeks, Spanish—two weeks, Italian—two weeks, German—three weeks, Russian—three weeks. This total of fourteen weeks allows leeway for tests, some variation, and discussion of a few subjects of general nature.

The longer period devoted to the first language serves a double purpose. It provides time for ample drill on new sounds, many of which will again be turned to account later in the other languages. Furthermore, some students have had no previous language training at all; most of the others have had no great stress on pronunciation or have forgotten such matters in the later emphasis laid on increasing vocabulary and reading. Even serious students have been known to affirm solemnly that in two years of Spanish, no one has ever breathed a word about a *b* which is different from the English one—and their Spanish instructors have just as solemnly declared there has been no such

guilt of omission. So this pronunciation course devotes four full weeks to its first language, and the time has not proved over-long.

There was no obvious textbook. A patchwork could have been made by using the introduction of elementary grammars in the five languages, but aside from the mechanical difficulty (no student wants to buy a series of books and use only a half dozen pages of each), there was the further drawback that examples given in such sketches of pronunciation are not such as a radio announcer needs. If the examples could be useful in themselves as well as for practice, two ends would be served. So a booklet of some thirty mimeographed pages was worked out, about half devoted to rules, the rest a selected list of words and expressions in the various languages.

The rules try to be adequate without sacrificing a reasonable standard of accuracy on the one hand, yet avoiding overwhelming the student with a mass of detail on the other. For example: no distinction is made between the two *a* sounds in French *là-bas*; no mention is made of the Spanish fricative sound of *g* (as in *agua*); but the use of an English *r* is not considered "good enough," nor are the occlusive *b* and *d* acceptable in all positions in Spanish. Some of the decisions made will probably appear defensible to some teachers and not to others. The omission of the Spanish fricative *g* just mentioned may be one; I myself have changed my mind on the statement given in these rules that *l* may be considered one of the consonants pronounced approximately as in English. But in general the principle seems right.

The practice material, grouped by language and subdivided into alphabetized groups of geographical and biographical names, titles from literature and music, and miscellaneous words and expressions, was made up by combining such lists as those in the Webster Collegiate dictionary. Terms which seemed needed but which did not follow the rules exactly were in-

cluded and marked with an asterisk and the irregularity was indicated. For example: \*Barrès (pron. *s*); \*Novalis (stress *va*; *v* as in Eng.).

Two questions of method appear at the outset, and the answers given probably would depend in each case as much on the instructor's beliefs as on objective considerations. Shall sounds be discussed in categories based on method of production or shall they be left as unscientifically grouped as they are in the alphabet? And shall a system of phonetic notation be used? The instructor who feels that not to give this training deprives the student of useful helps and rather fringes on heresy, will probably do well to follow his inclination with enthusiasm. Otherwise (and this is admittedly a subjective judgment), such notions should be used sparingly and only where a definite advantage is seen. (For instance, the obvious division into vowels and consonants; calling attention to the similarity of conditions causing "soft" and "hard" *c* and *g*; a brief discussion of voiced and voiceless consonants in cases of assimilation, and the like.) Phonetic script has been entirely omitted on the theory that instead of being an aid, it would tend to be a sixth "language"—and students find five enough for one semester. The approach would naturally be different if students of linguistics were involved.

Classroom procedure stresses much opportunity for hearing and imitation. Enrollment has varied from seven to seventeen, in other words small enough groups for a good deal of individual work. Ear training and increased awareness of how speech organs are being used with resultant improved ability to make unaccustomed use of them, come rather rapidly through trial-and-error, speeded up for the "hard" sounds (e.g. French *u* and close *eu*, the German *ch* sounds, the *r*) by descriptions, whatever effective tricks the instructor has acquired, and a mirror. If only men—and women too—would be vain enough to want to look at themselves when trying new sounds! Still they *can* be persuaded to use a mirror, and for rounded sounds especially, the improvement is sometimes spectacular.

A few periods or parts of periods are devoted to miscellaneous related subjects. Students often have no notion of what they can find

in a dictionary. Some dictionaries have separate listings of biographical, geographical, and common foreign terms. A library assignment gets students actually to see and handle various dictionaries and special vocabularies. A review of how dictionaries indicate pronunciation is in order, with a few sample words to be looked up in several different reference works, noting down how each represents their pronunciation. Then there is the matter of when to anglicize. A few hints on observation and good taste point the way to be followed and help the student avoid both too much and too little use of anglicized forms.

A word or two concerning administration. The course meets three times a week and carries regular credit. It has no prerequisites and does not count for language requirements. Any student, regardless of previous language training, may enroll. This may seem to invite repetition of work already done, but in practice we have found few students who have had courses in two languages, almost none with more than two, and as mentioned earlier, nearly all of these can profit a great deal by practice in pronunciation.

Although especially designed for radio announcers, the course has attracted several students with quite different interests. A few have been frankly curious about foreign words and phrases met in reading, radio listening, or other courses. Some have wanted to improve their pronunciation in a language already studied. Two have wanted help for singing; they needed practice especially in French, Italian, and German. There is enough flexibility to accommodate all these desires, and if such students are encouraged particularly to bring in material encountered in their own field of work, it adds to the lists already prepared and often brings in a new note of interest.

For stimulation of interest, as always, needs some consideration. Even for the most enthusiastic student (and instructor!) mere grinding through lists is boring. Relief coupled with a bit of useful information results from an occasional sixty-second sketch. *Xochimilco* leads to floating gardens and boats with girls' names in flowers; *Avranches* may occasion a personal remembrance of the American soldiers who called it *Av-a-ranch-eez*; *Ypres* = *Wipers* will get

a laugh and may help make something more than the bare name stick in the memory. Like the white space on a printed page, the time so used has a real function.

Results are hard to measure, but some attitudes are interesting. From the instructor's point of view, the level of proficiency reached has been adequate for nearly all students, significantly better than that for some. It has compared favorably with the pronunciation of students who have had a year course in an individual language. From the student's standpoint, comments have come especially from those whose work as student radio announcers

has made foreign pronunciation a regular need, and these people have appreciated the sense of added assurance and the saving of time otherwise spent in thumbing through reference books. And at least one instance of listener appreciation is on record. The French wife of one of our instructors, listening to one of WBAA's regular musical programs, exclaimed to her husband after the announcement of a French title: "Dis donc, qu'est-ce qui lui est arrivé, à ce garçon? Il prononce bien mieux, tout d'un coup!"

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#### TO THE STUDENTS WHO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

Gather ye wisdom while ye may,  
Old Time is still a-flying;  
The opportunities that sprout to-day,  
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of learning, the mind,  
To darkness he's retiring;  
The sooner to the end we wind,  
The nearer he's expiring.

To learn is best, at age the first,  
When mind is clear and calmer;  
But being spent, the worse and worst  
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not lazy, but use your time,  
Into all learning dig deep;  
For, having lost but once your prime,  
You may forever sleep.

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## *Confound Their Language, That They May Not Understand*

IT IS indeed strange that, in a country where education on the college level is becoming more and more commonplace, the people should be becoming less and less literate, but this would seem to be just what is happening in the United States today. While our schools and colleges are giving more attention to technical training, they are making very few successful attempts to teach to the future technicians and specialists the correct use of their native language. A larger variety of foreign language courses is being offered by our universities, colleges, and high schools. Even some grammar schools (for which this name is no longer appropriate) start their children in French or Spanish in the higher grades. Excellent! In order really to learn a language one cannot commence too soon; and, as everyone knows, young children are capable of picking up a new tongue with far less effort than that required when they are older. But if the end product of this process is to be a college graduate with the ability to translate grammatical German, Russian, or Sanskrit quickly and effortlessly into execrably misspelled and ungrammatical English, then something vital has been left out along the way.

Most American students are not aware that such things as declensions and conjugations exist until they first meet them in high school freshman Latin. The mere realization of the existence of these systems and recognition of their names will not do the whole job of correcting poor English, but this realization and recognition have more importance in an understanding of grammar and sentence structure than is generally admitted, or, perhaps, supposed. When a student is first forced to choose a nominative form for the subject of a sentence, an accusative for the object, and the proper form of a verb to motivate them (and to make these choices from a standard set of forms, each form having a name and a special use or uses) he usually starts to understand for the first

time the underlying plan and purpose of the English grammar through which he has been struggling blindly for the last few years. The student who never studies Latin, or some similarly constructed language, will, of course, never even get this far. The reason for this is that English grammar is usually presented as a series of more or less disconnected facts, so that, to the average student, no over-all plan is apparent. If more stress were placed upon declensions and conjugations in primary and secondary schools, using as a model of instruction the method used in almost any first course in a foreign language (or the method formerly used for teaching English in our grammar schools, for that matter!) the American student might be able to speak and write his own language upon graduation with no more mistakes in case, tense, or number than he makes in French after having studied it for four or five years. Very few second-year students of French, for instance, would think of saying or writing "entre vous et je," but how many college graduates (English majors not excepted) invariably use "between you and I"? Since language habits like this one are deplorably common among even "educated" Americans, it is easy to understand their strong disbelief in the fact that Latin declensions and conjugations were once used by the man on the street and were not just artificialities invented by later grammarians for the purpose of disciplining the minds of high school students!

My first great linguistic disillusionment came in my third year of high school. I had already become fascinated by language, and was, therefore, inclined to adore unreservedly its high priests, my English teachers. Until that time they had all been very worthy of that adoration. Then, however, I was assigned to the class of an elderly woman who was the head of the English department. She lived up to my linguistic expectations until one day when we met in print a word that was a great favorite of

hers and which she had used frequently. It had puzzled me before, as I had never been able to find it in any dictionary. I was not quite certain about its meaning, but for some reason I had never bothered to ask her about it. I took it for granted that it was the past tense of the verb "misle," a rare word not listed in dictionaries. The word, pronounced "mīzl'd," was, in our text, spelled "mised." I still have not forgotten that first slip, although most of the sins against English that I have heard committed since then have been much more heinous than mere mispronunciation.

Now a new mental disease would seem to be attacking the population. It has not, as far as I know, been recognized and classified by the psychiatrists; but it is here just the same. Grammar-phobia, in its congenital or acquired form, is running rampant throughout the country. Actually, the fear of grammar is only one of its components; it also includes the fear of spelling and the fear of correct semantic usage. What is being done to combat this ailment? Nothing. On the contrary, it is being encouraged and helped along by most of those who are in positions to fight it! Some of our grammarians have, themselves, succumbed to it, and it is spreading furiously among our modern writers. According to these writers, the present trend of literature is, and should be, toward simplification. To anyone with a reasonably large vocabulary and an adequate command of grammar the trend can seem to be only toward a grotesque oversimplification. This simplification, carried to such an extent, is not only unnecessary, but it is also rather insulting! Say the authors: "Use short simple words; use short simple sentences—long ones will confuse your reader (and you probably will not know how to punctuate them anyway); no clauses, mind! Cross out all of your adjectives; avoid metaphor; stay far away from internal punctuation; and cut and cut and cut!" I have seen examples of this literary style. The first ones that I saw went something like this: "This is John. John has a ball. The ball is red. I see the ball." The style is an excellent one—for first grade primers. If, however, a man who has gone through his first primer and managed to graduate from a high school or a college is still capable of understanding nothing more elaborate or complex than that primer, someone

has wasted a great deal of his time and his parents' money!

This Grammar-phobia, which is really a fear of the English language in its entirety, would probably respond better to preventive than to curative treatment. If, instead of humoring the disease by simplifying grammar, simplifying spelling, and decreasing the size of the sufferer's required vocabulary, the patient could be made strong enough to cope with his native language in its fullest form (as Americans and Englishmen have been able to do in the past) a more intelligent solution would be reached than the one toward which we are moving through Basic English, sign language, and picture writing. To tell a generation of writers who are already barely literate that they should, under no circumstances, read the works of writers of the past lest these classicists have an adverse effect upon the "simple" style of the moderns seems to me to be the height of intellectual insanity. That I have been told just that in a course in professional writing at a leading university makes me all the more grateful that most of my school years came during a time when people were still proud of the fact that they wrote and spoke good English, and were wholeheartedly trying to teach the next generation to do the same. Then, teachers encouraged their students to read anything and everything, and had not yet started to teach the tenets (suicidal from the standpoint of literacy) of "simplification." That there are such teachers today is probably true, but what chance have they against this carefully nurtured and widespread hysteria of the Comic Book Age?

If we are to break away from this trend, and I sincerely hope that we are, the break must be made by Education. Since the present system of English instruction does not seem to have the desired effect upon the student, and since no one seems able or willing to change the system, the only way in which a student may acquire a thorough command and understanding of his own language is by association, through the study of a foreign tongue. And the more formally complicated the structure of this other language is, the better job of teaching English grammar it will do.

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## *A Combined English-Foreign Language Literature Course for the Smaller College*

RECENT record enrollments in our colleges have swelled the number of students in courses of modern languages, but the increase has never been as great as that enjoyed by most other departments. With the decline in enrollment that most colleges are now experiencing and will continue to experience during the next few years, a declining foreign language enrollment presents a serious problem of survival, especially for advanced language courses, where my own personal observation, as well as that of colleagues, indicates that there has been no great upsurge in the number of students.

As a matter of fact, it is true that enrollments in advanced courses in a great many colleges are already extremely small and often nonexistent. If a survey which I have just completed is correct, ten per cent of the some three hundred and forty liberal arts colleges in the United States with enrollment between five hundred and two thousand do not even offer courses in French literature, and another ten per cent offer courses but have no students.\* These figures mean that in sixty-eight colleges, one out of five in this group, no French literature courses whatsoever are being taught this year.

The percentage of colleges where no French composition or conversation courses are taught is even greater. Forty per cent, or more than one out of three colleges in this group, do not offer any instruction in these subjects.

The picture is not much improved when we consider the number of students enrolled in those advanced courses in French which are taught. My survey indicates that there are ten or less students in eighty-five per cent of the courses, five or less students in fifty per cent of the courses, and three or less students in thirty per cent of the courses taught.

In view of the reluctance of college administrators to carry indefinitely the burden of small classes, how long will it be before many of these

classes composed of three or less students will be abandoned?

Or let us consider the problem from another angle. In eighteen per cent of those colleges which answered my questionnaire, only one advanced course in French was being taught, and the enrollment in that course was five or under. How long will it be before this eighteen per cent group is added to the twenty per cent group where no French courses above the sophomore level are taught?

Although my figures deal only with French courses, I am sure that similar studies of the enrollment in advanced courses of the other modern foreign languages would yield comparable results. It seems obvious that, unless these courses can in some way be strengthened, many run the immediate risk of being dropped and others can exist only on a tenuous basis from year to year. Such a situation weakens not only the language department but the whole liberal arts program.

The proposal that I should like to make to help meet this problem is simple, although on first consideration it may seem revolutionary. It is a plan which has been used successfully for three years in the French department at Augustana College. Why not open one or more of the literature courses to students who do not know the foreign language and who will do their reading and other required work in English? Let these students meet one hour a week less than those taking the course for language credit and allow them one less credit. For example, in a three credit course, foreign language students would meet three times a week and receive three credits, and other stu-

\* Questionnaires were sent at random to one hundred and seventy colleges falling within the prescribed enrollment figures. Ninety-eight colleges replied and furnished the information on which the figures of this report are based. The average enrollment of the participating colleges was nine hundred twenty-six. All figures are for the fall semester of 1950.

dents would meet twice a week and receive two credits in Comparative Literature—or in English, if no Comparative Literature department exists.

I am aware of at least two objections that are likely to be made to this type of course. One of these will certainly be that reading in translation is not as satisfactory as reading in the original. With this argument I am in accord. Yet I am not prepared to agree that reading in translation is not satisfactory at all, for such a position would imply that no benefit could be derived from reading the Bible in English translation. Surely we must admit that translations, imperfect as they are, do, to a very large extent, carry the content, if not the form, from one language to another.

A second objection likely to be presented is that the introduction of such a course would tend to place the emphasis on English and hence weaken the stress on the foreign language. In answer to this argument I should like to point out, in the first place, that if in any college this arrangement makes possible the continuance of an advanced language course, even in an adulterated form, it has strengthened, not weakened the language department in that college.

In the second place, I do not agree that the introduction of this course will necessarily weaken the foreign language content. Those who are taking the course for foreign language credit would read in the foreign language as before. The third class hour could be conducted entirely in the foreign language if the instructor desired. In fact, the designation of one class period when the foreign language was to be used exclusively would often increase the foreign language content of the literature course, for the figures of my survey show that English is used one half or more than one half the time (and often exclusively) in sixty-five per cent of the French literature courses in colleges having enrollments within the scope of this study.

Moreover, in addition to the one class period conducted in the foreign language, the teacher can insist that written work in the form of tests and reports be done in the foreign language, a practice concerning which I have no figures but which, I feel, is none too common. Actually, if the foreign language were used exclusively

during one class period out of three and if it were required in tests and written reports, the foreign language content would be greater than is now the case in the majority of literature courses.

But let us consider a secondary advantage which could very likely result from the adoption of the type of course that I propose. As was stated earlier, my survey indicates that forty per cent of our colleges with enrollment between five hundred and two thousand do not offer courses in composition or conversation. These colleges presumably do not offer these courses because they feel that the literature courses are the most important and that advanced enrollment is not sufficient to warrant other courses. A reinforcement in numbers in the literature courses might very conceivably justify the addition of one of these practical courses in the written or spoken language. And if that is possible, then certainly the foreign language program has been greatly aided.

Lest anyone think that the introduction of this type of literature course is motivated simply by the narrow self-interest of a foreign language teacher seeking to increase registration in his advanced courses, let me point out that the offering of such a course would be of great service to other departments of the liberal arts college. For example, a course in eighteenth century French literature in translation would be a valuable supporting course for a major in history or in philosophy. A number of French literature courses would be helpful to a major in English. A course in French classic literature would be valuable for the student in any of these subjects. These are only a few examples, and I am sure that the teachers of other modern languages can likewise see important relationships between their literature courses and courses taught in other departments.

In addition to the specific value of a course in translation as a supporting course in several areas, there is the wider advantage of making available to students in general important cultural courses competently taught by specialists in the field and hitherto open only to students who have taken two or three years of a foreign language.\* And when we consider the

\* Only three of the ninety-eight colleges answering my questionnaire offered courses in French literature in translation. These were taught by members of the French de-



small number of students that reach acquaintance with a foreign literature by the latter route, it should certainly make foreign language teachers wonder whether they should not assume a greater responsibility for the transmission of our various literary heritages.

The combined English-foreign language literature course can, it seems to me, meet a real need in many of our colleges. While offering to all students the opportunity to enroll in ably taught literature courses, it will at the same time assure the continued training of

language specialists who will be able, as in the past, to maintain the necessary close contact with foreign languages and literatures by studying them in the original.

LUCIEN WHITE

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partment. About one fourth of the replies mentioned courses in World Literature which were conducted by members of the English department and which included the study of some French works.

#### MON AMI

(Dedicated to Miss Janet Mealy)

Ah mon ami, quelle est la vie pour nous?  
Le ciel couvert, les jours sans fin,  
Ça c'est la vie pour nous.  
O, pourquoi doit-il être comme ça?

La vie n'est pas toute joie;  
Il y a tant choses qu'on doit avaler—  
Isolement, crainte, douleur.  
Alors, chaque personne a sa croix à porter.

Je pense beaucoup à ma douleur,  
Je crains toujours d'être isolée  
Mais quand je suis écoeuvée  
O! Quel bonheur,  
J'ai mon ami.

MARIE YVETTE FERRANTÉ  
*Endicott, New York*

# Notes and News

## *The Cultural Services of the French Embassy: Their History and Educational Importance*

In 1946 the "Centre Pédagogique" headed by Monsieur Jean Benoit-Levy, the celebrated French film producer, was created at 934 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Although an autonomous institution at first, it was subsidized by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. Finally, after the director left to join the film department of the United Nations, the Center was consolidated with the Services Culturels.

The aim of this service from its inception was to prepare exhibits of various sorts to be sent to both educational and non-educational groups. At the beginning the Embassy was very fortunate in having the cooperation of a group of French students from the Ecole Normale de Saint-Cloud who were studying at Teachers College, Columbia University. They worked together with the Embassy personnel on the ground floor in that section of the building now occupied by the Radiodiffusion Française.

The first two such exhibits prepared were picture exhibits on the works of Picasso and Matisse. These expositions were reviewed by a group of experienced teachers of the City of New York before they were sent out to the various schools requesting them. Their comments were solicited and changes were made on the basis of those suggestions. This procedure is followed before distribution of any such aids. Since the exhibits are designed primarily for schools, it is advisable that those immediately concerned—the instructors—be allowed to approve or disapprove of them first.

The initiative for the preparation of such exhibits comes either from the "Services Culturels," themselves, or from the educational groups in question. Usually the former put the display together. Many a time the large expositions at the Cultural Center serve as models for these smaller exhibits. An exhibit of the works of Balzac and one of the Encyclopedia of the eighteenth century, for instance, were prepared as the result of such a direct influence. Through the cooperation of such outside groups as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Wildenstein Gallery exhibits of illuminated table displays have been arranged. In this way viewers can become acquainted with French paintings of the time of Louis XIII or Louis XIV, or with artistic productions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Individuals or groups desiring information on the circulating exhibits write to the Cultural Services directly at the address given above. They receive the catalogue of available material. Every exposition prepared in the past is still available. None has been retired. When its first period of greatest utility is completed, as will be the case at the end of this year with the Victor Hugo exhibit, instead of taking the exhibit out of circulation, the staff of the Cul-

tural Services puts these exhibits into the collection of the FADC (Franco-American Distribution Center) for further use. In order to learn about the newest expositions available, one may read the French government newsletter "France in New York" (available free of charge) which will keep one up to date.

Since the cost of making the exhibits is borne by the Embassy and since the recipients need pay only the cost of transportation both ways, the exhibits are sent exclusively to those specifically asking for them. Once received, these expositions are usually kept for a period of between two to six weeks. Some school systems have kept them longer as have museums or libraries, but individual schools are asked to stay within the six week limit.

When a special event is to be observed, the Cultural Counselor sends letters to language departments asking whether and how they intended to observe that event. Colleges were queried in this way when the exposition celebrating the 2,000th anniversary of Paris was being assembled. During 1952 correspondence was carried on concerning the celebrations planned in honor of the works of Victor Hugo. The Embassy was interested in learning about plans that a school may have been contemplating and in finding out if several schools considered pooling their resources in order to give larger commemorative displays.

Upon receiving answers from high schools and colleges the service knows how to proceed because in these letters are contained suggestions as to the type of exhibition material most needed by the institutions concerned. The circulating exhibit is not assembled until these data are received, there being no use in preparing a display only to find out later that the material in it is a duplication of facilities already existing at the schools.

Because elementary schools, for the most part, do not give language courses, the number of exhibits specifically prepared for their use is limited. Those that are available are, of course, in English and aimed for use in English, Social Studies or Art classes. One display is especially popular on this level, a replica of a Norman farm house complete with inhabitants.

A group of young Norman students had been aided by America during the immediate post-war years. To show their gratitude, these French children made an exact model of the type of building they knew best and sent it to the United States. The "Services Culturels" has made replicas from the original model of the farmhouse and is distributing them to primary and junior high schools. It is ideal for teaching the younger children since, unlike most exhibits, it can be touched, handled and moved about by the viewers. More is put into play than the mere sense of sight. Two other

exhibits that would interest primary school children are "A Tournament in the Middle Ages" and "Stamps from the French Union."

While tactile exhibits attract primary school students, the high schools usually request exhibits of general types for which no specialized knowledge is needed. If none is available, they prefer other audio-visual aids. The traveling exhibit on Paris is a great success because the entire school can work together on it. No one department can monopolize the subject. A week is usually set aside for the project. The exhibit is received by the school and put in the library, assembly hall or classroom. The art classes prepare a panorama of the city; the social studies pupils discuss its history and the literature classes study the greatest authors who have written about Paris. French instructors usually organize the week's work and they see to additional details such as obtaining appropriate and interesting speakers. Finally it is the French teachers who initiate evaluation of the entire program.

The greatest number of requests for exhibits come from colleges and universities. For undergraduate courses general exhibits are again in great demand. Having superior facilities, colleges often stage these exhibits and then invite the high schools to come and visit them. Sometimes such a

visit serves as a reward for teen-aged boys and girls who have distinguished themselves in French or other courses.

At such a time slides and films are also borrowed. For special occasions the French Cultural Counselor goes on a lecture tour of several colleges in conjunction with the distribution of the newest circulating exhibit. Currently the Counselor has just completed a tour of universities where he spoke on Victor Hugo and his times. As added incentive to study the subject this year, the "Alliance-Française" offered a free trip to France to the college student who wrote the best essay on this topic.

Once the individual school or school board has finished using the exposition, it is returned to the Embassy to be sent out again when requested. As soon as the material is received, the Services send a post card to the group concerned asking whether the exposition was satisfactory and how it could be improved. Thus from a double evaluation—first from a group of instructors before sending out the exhibit and then from the institution which had most recently made use of it—the Cultural Counselor can decide which exhibits to prepare in the future.

RICHARD M. GRAF

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### *How to Be Happy in a Spanish Archive*

The period 1948-49 was an extremely trying one for all Spaniards. The protracted drought had affected not only the economy of the country but also the details of daily living; yet despite such additional trials in an already long-suffering country, the most lasting impression created in my mind by Spanish library and archive staffs during that year in Spain was their unfailing courtesy and eagerness to be helpful to a foreign research worker.

Some recently arrived foreigners do have difficulty in locating material in Spain; but if one keeps in mind that the old saying, "Everything is different in Spain, even the pine tree," applies to learned institutions as well, he will soon learn to find his way around. The Dewey Decimal System is very definitely not the usual method of classification employed in Spain. Hoping to locate material by means of consulting an alphabetized, general card-catalog is usually futile. On the other hand, knowing, for example, that the person about whom you wish to collect data was once connected with the Exchequer may, and probably will, yield results, for then by looking in the register labelled *Contaduría* you will find a description of documents concerning such personnel. It is also helpful to know from what source the depository acquired the type document in which you are interested. The *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, for example, has a record of documents received from Simancas; the *Biblioteca Nacional* has a special inventory of acquisitions from the collection known as *Ultramar*. Time spent with works such as Sánchez Alonso's *Fuentes de la historia española* or Schäfer's *Índice de documentos inéditos* is time well spent for the purpose of orienting oneself, even before arrival, as to where to look and what to look for.

Another excellent way of finding material in a Spanish

archive or library is by means of an interview with the Director or some other well-informed member of the staff. If you explain just what it is you are interested in finding, he will generally have some very fruitful suggestions as to what material, and what bibliographical aids to consult.

It is of course advisable to be equipped with suitable credentials in order to establish one's status as a scholar; yet on the whole it is incredibly easy to gain access to Spanish documents and rare volumes. Once one has been accepted as a reader, he may usually consult simultaneously as much material as he desires. Permission to have microfilm reproductions made is readily granted. The workmanship as such on this type service is excellent; however, most American research workers will probably be happier with the end-product if they bring a supply of their own film.

The atmosphere of many of the buildings themselves is delightful. Simancas, for instance, evokes a sensation of the Middle Ages from the moment one first glimpses it haughtily outlined across the clear Castilian sky; the sensation increases as one steps across the drawbridge, traverses the courtyards between the inner walls; then, after having climbed the century-smooth steps, and having lost oneself in sheaves of old documents telling their story of Spain, one's eye unconsciously turns from time to time to the deep, deep slits which serve as windows. And should it see an armored knight approaching across the plains, the sight would cause no wonder, for by then any identity which one might still feel with the twentieth century is extremely tenuous!

DOROTHY McMAHON

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## Grammar in Song and Verse

Although the quest for new teaching devices is an endless one, it is infinitely worthwhile because of its contributions to the vitalization of foreign language instruction. It is well to remember that there is no "one way" of teaching anything. Our methodologists would have us select and use our teaching devices in terms of the objectives to be attained by the pupils whom we teach. The answer to "What *can* he learn?" is to a large extent the determinant in "What *should* he learn?"

It is generally conceded by this time that grammar should be taught functionally. If it is to have more than abstract meaning, it must be motivated, taught, and practiced for improved and perfected comprehension and expression. The usual expedient which serves as a point of departure in the grammar lesson is a reading selection or a conversation in which the grammatical phenomena under consideration occur with sufficient frequency and variation to be essential for comprehension. The exercises that follow involve the use of the newly acquired grammatical construction(s) in meaningful written and/or spoken communication.

A vast, unexplored field of such "puntos de partida" exists in song and verse. The following are just a small sampling of limitless possibilities:

1. For the future tense, Bécquer's sonnet, "Volverán las oscuras golondrinas."
2. For the imperfect tense, the Décima from *La vida es sueño*, "Cuentan de un sabio que un día, etc."
3. For the familiar commands, the popular song,

"Cielito Lindo": No so lo *des* a nadie, *Canta* y no *llores*, etc.

4. For the future of probability, the popular song, "¿Quién será?"
5. For the condition contrary to fact, the popular song, "Cuatro vidas": Si yo tuviera cuatro vidas, cuatro vidas serían para ti.
6. For a review of the familiar adjectives and pronouns, Santos Chocano's "¿Quién sabe, señor?": ¿No *saben* que deben *luyas* ser por *tu* sangre y *tu* sudor?
7. For pronunciation of the vowel sounds, the refrain from Espronceda's "Canción del pirata."

The song or poem may be used equally well as the first or the last step in the lesson. The ability to recite the poem or sing the song is a reward in itself, but it also provides the student with an immediate reference for the correct formation and use of a tense, idiom, or grammatical construction. The teacher who makes use of this device must select his materials carefully with regard to degree of difficulty, appropriateness of content, and lyrical quality.

The student who has difficulty in using the imperfect tense may carry the lyrics of "Allá en el rancho" as his grammatical *vade mecum*: Allá donde *vivía*, *había* una rancherita que alegre me *decía*, etc. Perhaps he will cease to think of grammar as a thing apart, and realize that it is an essential thread in the fabric of living language.

HENRY MENDELOFF

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## Fellowships in Spain

Through the generosity of a private donor three fellowships have been made available for American graduate students to study in Spain from September 1, 1953 to July 1, 1954. Both men and women in any field of the humanities are eligible. Grantees may study at a Spanish university of their choice.

Each grant carries a stipend of \$1,900, allocated approximately as follows: round trip transportation, \$500;

maintenance, \$1,000 for the academic year; university fees, \$50; books and materials, \$50; travel within Spain, \$200; health insurance and contingencies, \$100.

Applications, on blanks to be secured from the U. S. Student Program of the Institute of International Education, must be filed with all supporting documents not later than May 8, 1953. It is hoped that candidates may be informed of the results of the competition by June 15.

## Emory Professor to Lead Study Group in Athens

An overseas summer session for students and teachers of the Classics is being planned for this summer under the direction of Dr. Robert L. Scranton, associate professor of the Classics at Emory University. The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, and the Bureau of University Travel are cooperating in making the six-week study in Greece possible.

The group will leave New York June 6. About half of the term will be spent in Athens, with lectures given on the Acropolis and in the museums. Excavations in the Agora will be visited. Three weeks will be spent on motor trips in Greece, visiting such sites as Delphi, Thebes, Corinth, Sparta, and Olympia.

## AAUP Scholar's Book List

The Association of American University Presses has authorized its forty-four members, including several affiliated organizations, to proceed with plans to provide more than 175,000 persons in four academic classifications with a descriptive catalog containing information on the books newly published by the university presses in the respective

fields on interests of the recipients. The plan calls for participation of all the Presses on a voluntary basis.

The purpose of the "AAUP Scholar's Book List" is to announce to these 175,000 persons the publication of books which the Presses feel will be of particular interest to them, and to facilitate the acquisition of such books.



# Audio-Visual Aids

## NEW FRENCH FILMS

*Under the Paris Sky*, 1952, 103 min. Apply for rental. Written and directed by Lulian Duvivier. French dialogue with English titles. The story of the city of Paris, intimately told through episodes in the lives of its citizens. In these interwoven dramatic incidents involving a poor old lady and her cats, a mad sculptor, a medical student, a factory worker and others, Duvivier has magnificently caught the pulse and intensity of a great city. (Brandon Films, 200 West 57th St., New York 19.) *Manon*, 91 min. 1950. Apply for rental. Directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot. French dialog with English subtitles. Not an opera film. Winner of Venice Film Festival. A bold tale of faith and faithlessness between two strangely restless lovers in the upheaval and moral let-down of contemporary Europe. (Brandon Films.) *Sarre Pleins Peux*, 22 min. Glimpses of the Sarre region between France and Germany. (Franco American Distribution Center, 792-Fifth Ave., N. Y.) Three films distributed by AAFilms, 1600 Broadway, N. Y. 19): *Ballet of the Atlas*, 10 min. Features dances of the Berbers of Morocco; *A Day Among the Berbers*, 14 min. Recreates a typical day in the life of these people; *Gallery of Modern Sculptors*, 13 min. Features intimate glimpses into the lives and work of some of the world's great modern French sculptors. *Paris on the Seine*, 30 min. Color. Music background. Both English and French versions available. Scenes of the life of the people of Paris.

## FILMS ON LATIN AMERICA

*Maya of Ancient and Modern Yucatán*, 22 min. color. Takes as its theme the idea that the early European explorers of America found it difficult to believe that American Indians, such as the Maya, Aztec, and Incas had developed a distinct civilization of agriculture, religion, government, and arts and sciences, such as

mathematics, astronomy, and architecture. The tenor of the narration is intended to counteract the notion that all civilization came to the New World from other continents, and to emphasize the fact that while the American Indian civilization did not develop to the same heights as others, it followed the same pattern of development. Produced and photographed by Guy D. Haselton. (Bailey Films, Inc., 6509 De Longpre Ave., Hollywood 28, Calif.) *Birth of a Volcano*, 11 min. Sale: \$27.50. A breath-taking, 5 year pictorial record of fiery birth of Mexico's famous Paricutín volcano. (Sterling Films, Inc., 316 West 57th St., N. Y. 19.) *El mañana es la obra de hoy*, a Spanish version of Tomorrow Meets Tomorrow, a Ford sponsored film, produced by MPO Production, Inc., 15 East 53rd St., N. Y. 22, showing how Ford designs, engineers and tests automobiles.

## RUSSIAN CLASSIC

Eisenstein's famous film based on the 1905 revolt of the Cruiser "Potemkin," by the same name, is now available on 16 mm from Contemporary Films, Inc., 13 East 37th St., N. Y. 16.

## NEW GERMAN FILMS

*Marriage in the Shadows* (Ehe im Schatten), 89 min. 1948. Apply for rental. Directed by Hans Maetzig. Produced in Berlin. German dialog with English subtitles. Psychological thriller and realistic drama wrought into a stunning film by fine cinema craftsmanship, sensitive portrayals, and a real story of great social impact, the tale of an Aryan actor's attempt to remain united to his Jewish wife during the Nazi period. (Brandon Films.) *Rise of a Dictator*, 30 min. Lease apply. An excerpt from the feature film "The Hitler Gang." Traces the dictator's rise from an obscure corporal in the defeated German army to absolute ruler of the Reich. Emphasis is upon the meth-

ods used by Hitler to split the populace into helpless minorities, defeating them one by one; his utilization of the "big lie"; intimidation through systematic terror, and control through Storm Troopers and the Hitler Jugend. Produced by Paramount; available through Teaching Film Custodians, 25 W. 43rd St., N. Y. 18.

#### NEW FILMSTRIPS

##### *Latin America:*

"Pedro and Maria of Mexico," 1952. 22 frames. \$4. Color. (Children Near and Far Series.) Shows how the children live, play, are educated, what food they eat and what clothes they wear. (Eye-Gate House, 2716 41st Ave., Long Island City, N. Y.) "Guatemala," 1950. 46 frames. Color. (Central America Series.) \$4. Includes 21 pictures and 25 titles. Gives maps, highways, lakes, cities, churches, people, industries, tests. (Stillfilm, Inc., 171 So. Los Robles Ave., Pasadena 5, Calif.) "Honduras," 1950. 44 frames, titles. Color. \$4. Includes 21 pictures and 23 titles. Similar in content to Guatemala. "El Salvador," "Panama," "Nicaragua," and "Costa Rica," all four similar to Guatemala and Honduras in content, color, \$4, all distributed by Stillfilm. "Our South American Neighbors," set of 5 filmstrips, \$15 for set, \$3 each. Physical geography, natural resources, industry, agriculture and customs of six representative South American countries. Based on Encyclopaedia pictures and related with geography. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Colombia and Venezuela. (Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois.) "Our North American Neighbors," about 60 frames each. Set of eight filmstrips, \$24 per set, \$3 each. Similar to above and also by EBFilms. Include Canada (4 filmstrips), Alaska, Land of Mexico, Central America, and West Indies.

##### *Southern Europe:*

Set of five filmstrips in color, priced at \$30 or \$6 each. These filmstrips provide a comprehensive geographical survey of five important European countries: France, Spain, Switzerland, Italy and Portugal. Also discuss topography, agriculture, industries, transportation system, major resources, and everyday life of the people of respective country. (Dudley Pic-

tures Corp., 9908 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif., or large film distributor.)

"Dante Alighieri," 1952. 24 frames, color with captions. \$4. Pictorializes some of the events in the life of the author and factors in the Italy of the 13th century which led him to produce *The Divine Comedy*. (Eye-Gate, Inc., 2716-41st Ave., Long Island City 1, N. Y.)

#### REALISTIC VISUAL AIDS

Realistic Visual Aids, P.O. Box 11, Highland, Calif., announces a science display for children, consisting of an insert *terrarium*, or ant box, with complete instructions. Through glass panels children see how ants go underground, build tunnels, get and store food, care for young, etc. \$2.98. Also photographs 8×10 and 11×14 to illustrate social studies on community life, dairy farming, Mexico, South American and other subjects. Language teachers may find use for latter, especially.

#### UNITED STATES ARMY IN FRANCE USES TAPE AND FILMSTRIPS

Educational Laboratories, Inc., of Washington, D. C., has recently installed at SHAPE headquarters, a new technique to eliminate language barriers. The new laboratory consists of 12 semi-soundproof booths built around the new Educorder Dual Channel tape recorder that provides individualized instruction and a close teacher-student relationship. Facilities are also provided through a "black box" custom designed by Educational Laboratories and to be offered soon for public sale, for synchronizing a tape recorded lecture with filmstrip or slide material by having a special signal in the tape actuate an automatic projector. The new laboratory makes it possible for one of the 88 generals and admirals to sit down at his booth and have a private language lesson in French while his neighbor is working on an entirely different language.

#### TWENTIETH-CENTURY-FOX NEW SERIES

This firm is releasing on a world-wide basis a series of short motion pictures in 16 mm., dealing with the lives of world-renowned masters of art and their paintings. Will include the stories of Botticelli, Rembrandt, Vermeer, Degas, Renoir and Raphael.

# Meetings

## *Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee, National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association*

The Executive Committee of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations met at the Hotel Statler, Boston, Massachusetts, at 10 A.M. on December 30, 1952, with President Arthur P. Coleman in the chair. The roll call showed eight of the eleven constituent associations represented by eleven of their fourteen regular delegates, absentees being Miss Fulton (New York State), Mr. Hespelt (AATSP), and Miss Klaus (Pennsylvania State). The Managing Editor and Business Manager of the *Modern Language Journal* were also present as *ex-officio* members of the Executive Committee.

The minutes of the 1951 meeting were presented as published in the *Modern Language Journal*, for May, 1952 (pp. 252-253) and approved after being amended to show that the Treasurer's financial report for 1951, having been duly audited by a professional auditor and by the auditing Committee, had been formally approved.

President Coleman gave a brief informal report, which was accepted with "leave to print" in more extended form in the *Modern Language Journal*. The Secretary also made a brief informal report.

As Treasurer, the Secretary presented his annual financial report, showing a balance from 1951 of \$2,732.42 in the current checking account, and receipts during the year of \$2,001.59, of which \$1,954.48 was the surplus from operations of the *Modern Language Journal* for 1951, \$37.47 royalties from the Syracuse University Press, and \$9.64 a refund from Professor Milton L. Shane (overpayment of traveling expenses to the 1951 meeting). Expenditures amounted to \$1,124.02, leaving a balance on hand, December 12, 1952, in the checking account of \$3,609.99. In addition the Federation has in its reserve fund \$7,000.00 (maturity value) of Series F, U. S. Savings Bonds, of which \$1,000 is due June 1, 1957 and \$6,000 March 1, 1960. These bonds are deposited in safe-deposit box #4026, American Security and Trust Company, Main Office, Washington, D. C. The reserve fund also includes a savings account in the same bank (account #41401), which showed a balance as of December 11, 1952 of \$1,045.44. The Treasurer's accounts had been professionally audited by A. E. Smith, accountant in the Office of the Comptroller of The George Washington University, and by the Auditing Committee appointed by President Coleman, consisting of Julio del Toro and Charles W. French, and certified correct. On motion it was voted to accept the Treasurer's report. It was further voted to authorize the Treasurer to investigate the possibility of obtaining a larger return on the savings account.

The Managing Editor of the *Modern Language Journal*, Professor Julio del Toro, made an informal report on the

problems of an editor. Individual members of the Executive Committee expressed great satisfaction at the improved appearance of the *Journal* in its new format and more attractive covers.

The Business Manager of the *Modern Language Journal* presented a detailed financial report, professionally audited and found correct by Joseph Dixon of the Auditing Department of the St. Louis Public Schools and further examined and found correct by the Executive Committee's Auditing Committee, Messrs. Del Toro and French. On motion, the Business Manager's report was approved as audited. The Business Manager also presented his usual annual detailed analysis of the distribution of subscribers to the *Journal*.

The Treasurer discussed informally the matter of Social Security for the three remunerated officers of the Federation, and the Executive Committee voted to authorize him to take such steps and incur such expense as might be necessary to solve the problems involved.

Under "old business," the Secretary read the final report of Dr. Charles M. Purin, Chairman of the Committee on the Recruitment, Training, and Placement of Teachers of Modern Foreign Languages. Members of the Executive Committee spoke in high terms of the way in which the "Survey" had been conducted by Dr. Purin, and voted (1) to accept his report with appreciative thanks and to discharge the General and Advisory Committees with thanks for their services; (2) to instruct the Secretary to convey to Dr. Purin especially the Executive Committee's thanks for his self-sacrificing and efficient work, and to include similar thanks to all who participated in the Survey (a letter to this effect was sent to Dr. Purin under date of January 2, 1953); and (3) to authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to pay any outstanding expense accounts, including an additional \$10.00 to the State Chairman for Oklahoma; and (4) to request all state chairmen to keep their organizations intact in case of future calls from the National Federation or the Modern Language Program of the Modern Language Association of America. The Secretary further reported that Dr. Purin plans to prepare for publication in the *Modern Language Journal* a more detailed report, including a summary of the trends disclosed by the Survey. The Secretary also gave a detailed report of the expense of the Survey to date, amounting to \$764.16. Unpaid expense accounts are not likely to raise this total much beyond the \$800 mark; but it must be remembered that the Survey was carried on entirely by volunteer, unremunerated workers, that many state committees raised funds "on their own" to finance it, and that in some cases the institution at which the state chairman was located

helped to bear the clerical burden, or the chairman's department collected funds for the purpose. Many individuals concerned also contributed their personal expenses for travel, postage, and the like. All in all, the Survey was carried out at amazingly small expense considering the amount of detailed work involved. The resulting materials have been turned over to the Modern Language Program of the Modern Language Association of America for study and analysis by its staff.

For the Committee on Language Week, the chairman, Professor Jacquetta Downing of the University of Wichita, presented a written report, which was read by the Secretary. Miss Downing believes that universities and colleges are carrying on similar programs which are reaching the high-school students. She suggested that her successor as chairman merely act as a coordinator of these programs, and made other suggestions. The Executive Committee felt that it was worth while to continue the program in high schools, and voted: (1) to accept Professor Downing's report with thanks; (2) to discharge the present committee, including its sectional chairmen, with the thanks of the Executive Committee; and (3) to authorize President Coleman, in consultation with the Secretary-Treasurer, to appoint a new Committee on Foreign Language Week.

The matter of re-affiliation with the *Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes* was again brought up, the President and Secretary-Treasurer having declined to exercise the authority granted by the Executive Committee at the 1951 annual meeting. A letter from Professor C. D. Zdanowicz, a former member of the Executive Committee, advocating re-affiliation with the *Fédération*, was read in full. After discussion, participated in by Professor Charles W. French, who like Professor Zdanowicz had formerly served as the National Federation's delegate to the *Fédération Internationale*, it was voted not to re-affiliate with the *Fédération Internationale*.

The Executive Committee then proceeded to elect officers for 1952-53. The present officers: President Arthur P. Coleman, Alliance College, *President*; Miss Emma M. Birkmaier, University High School, University of Minnesota, *Vice-President*; and Dean Henry Grattan Doyle, The George Washington University, *Secretary-Treasurer*, were re-elected by unanimous vote.

Under "new business," the matter of affiliation with the National Education Association was then discussed at great length. Dr. Walter H. Freeman, delegate from the New Jersey Association, made a strong plea for a "representative" in Washington who should speak for both ancient and modern foreign languages and even for English, and urged early action to bring this about. Other discussion involved the question of willingness to cooperate with teachers of the Classics or of English. The Secretary-Treasurer read a statement received by Miss Emilie Margaret White, president of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, from Dr. Lyle W. Ashby, an N.E.A. official who is in charge of affiliated organization, in which he discussed the requirements for affiliation, the services offered by the N.E.A. to affiliated organizations, the relationship of publications of affiliated organizations to the N.E.A., the expense involved, and the like. The Secretary-Treasurer called attention to certain ambiguities in the statement. For instance, a provision of the N.E.A. by-

laws states that active members of the N.E.A. "and no others" are eligible for membership in an N.E.A. department, a requirement which, according to the statement, is "not rigidly enforced," and there is divided opinion in the N.E.A. as to whether it should be. "Suppose it is?", the Secretary asked. In that case, according to an N.E.A. pamphlet entitled "Guiding Principles," members of the proposed department would apparently be required to pay separate dues "over and above the N.E.A. dues." Membership fees of departments located in the N.E.A. headquarters have to be transmitted to the Executive Secretary of the N.E.A. by the Secretary of the Department, and are held in his custody, to be expended on the recommendation of the executive officers of the department. The average salary of a secretary of a subject-matter department is about \$7,500. One or more clerical assistants would be needed, at salaries ranging between \$2,500 and \$3,000.

A paragraph under "requirements" in Dr. Ashby's statement includes the following: "The N.E.A. expects departments, through their publications, promotion materials, and conferences to support and promote the program of the parent association." The Secretary wondered whether this would involve supporting and promoting some of the pronouncements of the Educational Policies Commission, or such a publication as "Education for All American Youth," virtually an expansion, according to Professor I. L. Kandel of Teachers College, Columbia, of "What the High Schools Ought to Teach" of unsavory memory.

With regard to the idea that the National Federation might "become" the proposed department of the N.E.A., Messrs. French, Pitcher, and Doyle pointed out that any change in the structure or program of the National Federation would require constitutional changes, a process involving much time and requiring the approval of two-thirds of the constituent associations at their respective annual meetings. It was further pointed out that the *Modern Language Journal* is owned jointly by the constituent associations, and could not be turned over to a department of the N.E.A. except by the same constitutional process. Mr. Pitcher called attention to the existence of a committee on affiliation with the N.E.A. which had reported unfavorably some years ago. The Executive Committee voted: (1) to discharge the old committee, and (2) to authorize President Coleman to appoint a new committee to investigate further, with the understanding that its report to the Executive Committee should be sent to other organizations concerned. The president thereupon appointed the following committee: Julio del Toro (*chairman*), Henry Grattan Doyle (*vice-chairman*), Miss Emma Birkmaier, Stephen A. Freeman, and Stephen L. Pitcher, all of whom expect to be in Washington for the U. S. Office of Education's Conference on the Role of Foreign Languages in American Education on January 15 and 16, 1953.

Professor James B. Tharp moved that the Federation grant \$200 to Dr. Joseph V. Thomas, who recently completed a dissertation under Professor Tharp on special methods courses in modern foreign language teaching. The purpose of the subsidy would be to enable Mr. Thomas to visit a number of institutions included in his survey. The motion failed to pass.



Miss Elfriede Ackermann discussed the importance of teaching languages in the grades and the progress made in this area. The Secretary reported that all the delegates to the National Federation had been invited to attend Commissioner McGrath's Conference in Washington on January 15 and 16, 1953. It was voted (1) to support the position taken by Dr. Earl J. McGrath in his address on "Language Study and World Affairs," delivered at the annual meeting of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association in St. Louis on May 3, 1952, and (2) to offer the Federation's cooperation in the program. (A letter to this effect was sent to Dr. McGrath by the Secretary on January 2, 1953.)

The Modern Language Program of the Modern Language Association of America was then discussed, and it was voted to pledge the Federation's support and offer its cooperation in the Program. (Letters to this effect were promptly sent to Professor W. R. Parker, Secretary of the MLA, both by President Coleman and by the Secretary.)

Under further new business, it was voted to re-adopt the resolution regarding emergencies voted at the 1950 meeting, with the addition of the Managing Editor and Business Manager of the *Modern Language Journal* to the Special Emergency Committee, making a committee of five. The 1950 resolution is as follows:

"In view of the possibility that emergency conditions may prevent holding the regular annual meeting of the Executive Committee in 1951 or thereafter, the Executive Committee hereby designates its officers, namely the President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer, as a Special Emergency Committee *ad interim*, and hereby delegates to said Special Emergency Committee all its own powers for the duration of any national emergency. The Executive Committee hereby authorizes the Special Emergency Committee to exercise these functions in case of need, with the understanding that the Emergency Committee shall consult the regularly elected members of the Executive Committee by mail before taking any action

not of a routine nature or any action involving a change of policy, unless such consultation and approval by mail proves to be impossible. Any action taken by the Special Emergency Committee under these conditions is hereby authorized and approved as the action of the Executive Committee itself."

It was reported that Dr. Theodore Huebener, compiler of the latest edition of "Vocational Opportunities for Foreign Language Students" wished to expand the pamphlet for commercial publication as a book by a regular publisher. It was pointed out that in that case some equitable division of royalties between Dr. Huebener and the Federation would be only fair. It was voted to refer the matter, with power, to Messrs. Pitcher and Del Toro.

Professor Charles W. French then introduced a series of resolutions, which were unanimously adopted. The resolutions are as follows:

1. That alternate delegates be chosen from members of constituent associations of the Federation who are planning to be present at the M.L.A. meetings, and in such cases no travel expenses be paid to such delegates by the National Federation.
2. That alternate delegates be required to present proper credentials and to remain throughout the entire session of the Executive Committee.
3. That all delegates inform the Secretary-Treasurer as to whether they are receiving travel expenses from sources other than the National Federation in order to attend its meeting or those of the M.L.A. Should they receive such expense money, the Federation will not duplicate travel payments.
4. That all persons officially connected with the Executive Committee be required to subscribe to the *Modern Language Journal*.

The Executive Committee adjourned at 3:00 P.M., having sat steadily for five hours and having transacted business throughout the luncheon period.

Respectfully submitted,  
HENRY GRATTAN DOYLE  
Secretary-Treasurer

### *American Association of Teachers of Italian*

The thirtieth annual meeting of the AATI was held Sunday evening, 28 December 1952 following a *pranzo* served for about fifty guests at Pieroni's restaurant, Park Square, Boston. After a message of welcome, President Angeline Lo Grasso presented the guests of honor, Honorary President Ernest H. Wilkins and Professor Emeritus George B. Weston, of Harvard, who spoke briefly. The Secretary then read the minutes of the 1952 meeting prepared by Acting-Secretary Antonio Pace. These were accepted. The report of the Acting Editor, William T. Starr, of Northwestern University, was heard and accepted. The Treasurer then commented briefly on his mimeographed report already distributed, and submitted his papers to an auditing committee of Professors Thomas Bergin and Grazia Avitable. He then reported informally as Secretary; this report was accepted.

Mr. Anthony Gisolfi presented the report of the nominating committee and on motion of Professor McAllister the Secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the candidates as nominated: President, Vincent Luciani

City College of New York; Vice-Presidents, Albert E. Trombly, University of Missouri and Carlo Golino, University of California at Los Angeles; Secretary-Treasurer, Alfred Galpin, University of Wisconsin; Councilors, Luigi Cognasso, Ohio State University, Miss Ruth E. Young, Smith College, and Joseph Lo Bue, Trenton High School, New Jersey.

Miss Lo Grasso read from a letter from Miss Emilie White of Washington, D. C., sponsor of a program to establish a department of language in the National Education Association (NEA). She offered as a motion Miss White's proposal that the AATI request the National Federation of Modern Foreign Language Teachers Associations (NFMFLTA) to act for it in taking steps necessary for the establishment of such a department in which the AATI, with other language groups, could be properly represented. In the ensuing discussion, Professors McAllister and Pane strongly favored the proposal, Mr. Ciofarri advised a cautious approach, and the Secretary pointed out that he was due to represent the association in the meeting of the

Executive Council of the NFMFLTA to be held Tuesday 30 December. Mr. Cioffari proposed as a substitute motion that the President name at once a committee of two college and two high-school teachers to investigate and report on Miss White's proposal, to advise the Secretary before Tuesday morning and to have power to act for the association if necessary. This was passed by a show of hands, 19 to 3, the majority abstaining. Mr. McAllister then moved that the Association express itself as in sympathy with the proposal in principle, but wishes to empower the committee to act on it at its discretion. This was passed unanimously.

The Secretary moved a vote of thanks to his colleague, Professor Karl G. Bottke, who handled his work for eight months during a sabbatical trip to Europe. This was passed unanimously. There followed a discussion on the possibility of printing, or otherwise reproducing for dis-

tribution, a complete membership list of the Association. The membership unanimously passed Mr. Cioffari's motion that the organization strongly favors having such a list, and recommends that the Editor seek means to realize it. On the motion of Mr. McAllister it was recommended that the officers explore the possibility of obtaining financial support more easily by incorporating, or by any other feasible means. This was carried. Miss Avitabile reported approval of the Treasurer's report and this action of the auditing committee was accepted. A circular letter to the Editor, Mr. Fucilla, was distributed for signature as the President closed the meeting with comments on the role of the teacher in the present crisis. Adjournment was at 10 o'clock.

Respectfully submitted,

THOMAS BERGIN

Secretary-Treasurer

### *The Annual Meeting of the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Middle States*

The Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Middle States held its annual meeting in Atlantic City at Haddon Hall on Saturday morning, November 29, 1952. Professor Albert W. Holzmann of Rutgers University, President of the Association, presided. After a business meeting the group was privileged to hear two speakers.

The first speaker was Dr. George H. Schuster, President of Hunter College, who gave a stimulating talk on the subject "American Leadership and Problems of Language." The following remarks are a digest of his speech: "American commitments in the world at large are unprecedented. Not even the empires of the past have been compelled to man so many outposts. Some of these responsibilities result from the quest for security. Others are products of trade activities which have grown increasingly more complex. There-with the problem of communication has assumed crucial importance. Language is a two-fold thing. It is a possession and an instrument. By possession I mean that a people's language is the repository of its traditions, experiences, history and social habits. By instrument I mean a vehicle which transfers the thoughts and feelings of someone else to the person interested.

"Education in the United States has tended increasingly to ignore both. Very few of us can use another language as an instrument. Virtually none of us can evaluate another language as the possession of another people.

"This is perhaps the major reason why we always seem to other nations outsiders—those who have nothing to give or to receive save in the realm of material things, of which we have, to be sure, very many. This unfortunate relationship deprives us of the benefit of much that we do, even when it is done in the spirit of generosity. How it deprives us can be seen at all levels—in military associations, in diplomatic relations, in propaganda activity.

"There are three remedies: First, the teaching of languages must be improved. It is possible to do so only if language learning habits are acquired sufficiently early in life. Some persons can develop linguistic skills in later years, but experience indicates they are relatively few. Second, we must learn to approach other peoples not merely

in terms of economic and political relationships, though these are important, or through the social sciences only. This fact may give humanistic studies a pertinence they have lacked recently. Third, the official government concept that personal communication based on long experience is unimportant should be altered.

"None of these is easy to do. Something like an educational revolution seems necessary."

The second speaker was Miss Maude Helen Duncan of Temple University. Her topic was "Foreign Languages in Tomorrow's World." She opened her remarks by stating "Not only the well-being but the survival of tomorrow's world depends on international understanding and co-operation. International understanding cannot be assured by studying the problem in unilingual isolation. Educators talk much about international relations and lasting peace, but most of them are neglecting the most important means of acquiring that understanding which leads to the longed-for peace—the study of the tongues of other lands."

Reflecting on her past two summers in Europe, where she was co-director of the Temple University-Sorbonne Study Abroad Program, Miss Duncan pointed out the amazing speed of transportation, the devastation of war in Europe, and the growing effects of the unilingual isolation of Americans. Then looking into the future she pictured an exciting world in which people will be living amid mechanical gadgets catering to comfort and pleasure—the people of every nation living more closely dependent upon their far distant contemporaries than the people of the United States are on one another today.

She went on to say: "With the pace of change in the world have come new responsibilities, also new prestige, for the teachers of foreign tongues. If we are to move ahead on the language front of tomorrow's world, we must first map out a course of action and unite in our efforts to carry it out. The professional educational organizations and administrators must be urged to provide opportunities beginning in the lower grades for many children to study other tongues. Language teachers must be prepared to implement the aims so ably set forth by the United States

Commissioner of Education in his notable address on "Language Study and World Affairs." We must develop the materials and the best techniques and adapt them to the needs of our students. The teacher of a foreign tongue must travel and study in the country whose language he teaches. He must be a channel overflowing with the living material of the language.

"Fifty years from now, some historian may record that in the mid-twentieth century Americans became aware of the fact that if they did not awaken from their unilingual isolation, they would lose their leadership and their freedom. May he record also that the necessary language competencies were achieved."

Miss Duncan concluded her remarks by saying: "With an enlightened program for foreign languages in tomorrow's world we may more confidently look forward to an era of mutual understanding and fellowship, to a real 'confederation of the world,'—to an enduring Peace."

Following a discussion of the two papers the meeting adjourned.

At the business meeting the following officers were elected for the year 1953:

President: Dr. Norman L. Torrey, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.

1st Vice-President: Miss Esther M. Eaton, Garden City High School, Garden City, N. Y.

2nd Vice-President: Sister Maria Lucy, Immaculata College, Immaculata, Pa.

3rd Vice-President: Miss Maude Helen Duncan, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa.

Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. Kathryn B. Hildebran, Western Maryland College, Westminster, Md.

Respectfully submitted,  
KATHRYN B. HILDEBRAN  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Second Session of the Dual-Meeting of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association will be held in Milwaukee, May 1 and 2, at the Plankinton House. Room reservation should be made as early as possible.

## Book Reviews

FRANCE, ANATOLE, *Les Dieux Ont Soif*. Edited by Lawrence Lee and Earl G. Mellor. 208 pp., plus vocabulary 77 pp.; The Dryden Press, New York, 1951, \$2.50.

This attractive school edition is greatly enhanced by twenty full-page prints and engravings taken from periodicals of the time, which serve to put the student in the historical atmosphere of the French Revolution. Although there is no introduction by the editors, the Dryden Press makes available to teachers (and presumably also to students, since additional copies are available gratis to teachers using this text) an admirable essay by Leo Gershoy, Professor of History, New York University, entitled modestly "Some Historical Notes for *Les Dieux Ont Soif*." I am not quite certain why this 22-page essay was not included in the textbook, for it gives with remarkable clarity not only a literary introduction to Anatole France, but also an excellent résumé of the events of the French Revolution, clarifying the narrative, and a discussion of the author's point of view in writing his novel. According to Professor Gershoy it was not the Revolution itself which France was satirizing, for "he conveys a sense of grandeur and the epic vision of an experiment that went wrong" and "gives powerful intimation that a new world was struggling for birth." What he is really doing is satirizing the perversion of the revolutionary dream and reaffirming the value of democracy by showing the terrible danger of yielding to totalitarian oligarchy willing to subordinate the right of the individual to the pursuit of an impossible millennium.

In so far as the actual editing of the text is concerned, high praise is due the editors for their careful scholarship and accuracy. The vocabulary is unusually complete; a random though not too superficial check failed to find the omission of a single word. The only misprint in the text which I could find was *nationnale* on page 7, line 1. On page 25 footnote 3, Vernett, French painter should be Vernet. Any one who has ever edited a textbook will agree that the proof-reading in this edition is little short of miraculous.

Equally deserving of encomiums are the scholarly footnotes which show the great erudition of the editors and make the tangled skein of events comprehensible even for the second-year student with little or no background on the French Revolution. If there is any adverse criticism possible, it would be that the editors have perhaps been a little too meticulous and exhaustive in these notes. Particularly is this criticism justified in the amount of repetition, which to this reviewer became somewhat annoying. Instead of referring to a preceding note or assuming that the reader can remember information for at least a few pages,

the editors seem to pride themselves on repeating, sometimes almost word for word, footnotes or grammatical points and especially historical data. For example, Place de Thionville (Place Dauphine) is explained on page 3 and again on page 10, Brissot and his Brissotins are explained in detail at least four times, as are Fragonard and the painters of the 18th century. This repetition of material might have been avoided by putting the information in the vocabulary, where one insertion would have sufficed.

*Les Dieux Ont Soif* is an exciting story, and the irony and philosophy of the author should make it fascinating for teachers and fairly advanced students. Because of the rather large vocabulary and the richness of historical and aesthetic background, it should not be read, I think, before the fourth semester, and even then would appeal primarily to colleges blessed with rather mature and well-equipped French students. For classes of this kind it can be recommended without reservation.

MAXWELL A. SMITH

University of Chattanooga

MOLIÈRE. *L'Etourdy ou les Contretemps*. comédie publiée par Pierre Mèlèse. Librairie Giard, Lille, 1951. pp. 136.

*L'Etourdy* was first played in Lyon in 1653 or 1655—more likely the latter date—and in Paris in 1658. It is Molière's first comedy, and though it cannot be compared to his later plays, it has enough value to justify its reading.

The title is misleading, as the play is not a study of a blunderer as *l'Avare* is one of a miser; it is simply as was its Italian original, *L'Inavvertito*, a succession of more or less improbable mishaps, brought about by the doings of a well-meaning but scatterbrained young man. There is no unity of composition, the characters are all stock ones, the style is weak and careless. There are, however, gaiety, fantasy, and action, and irrepressible spirits which already foretell *Le Médecin malgré lui* and *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, while the ingenious and scheming man-servant, Mascarille, played of course by Molière himself, is the forerunner of all the valets of the subsequent plays.

The play we are reviewing is preceded by a very good introduction in French; it is written as in its first edition in 1663, which might make it difficult for students not familiar with 17th-century spelling; there is no vocabulary, but there are footnotes and a seven-page *lexique*, all in French. On the whole, a very satisfactory and praiseworthy book.

AGNÈS DUREAU

Western Reserve University